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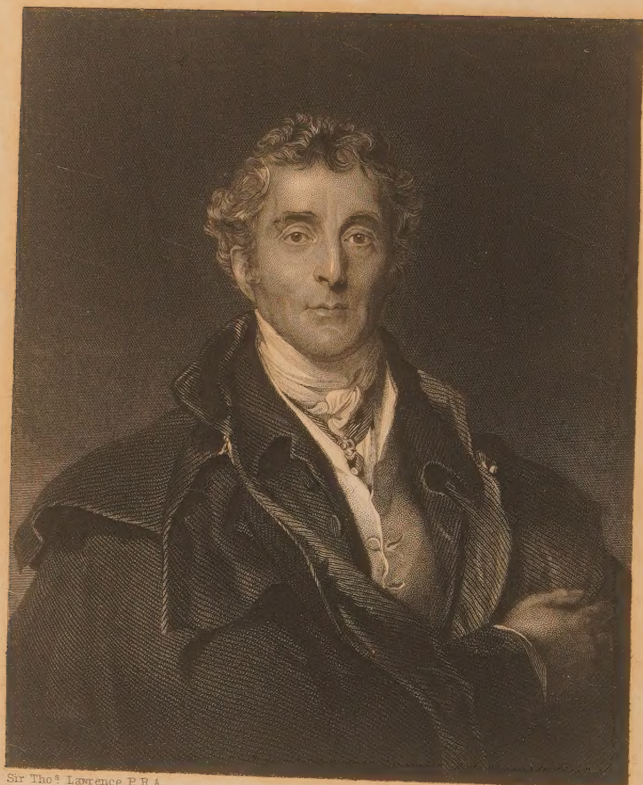
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HISTORY OF EUROPE

“BELLUM maxime omnium memorabile, quæ unquam gesta sint, me scripturum ; quod, Hannibale duce, Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessere. Nam neque validiores opibus ullæ inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma, neque his ipsis tantum unquam virium aut roboris fuit : et haud ignotas belli artes inter se, sed expertas primo Punico conserebant bello : odiis etiam prope majoribus certarunt quam viribus : et adeo varia belli fortuna ancepsque Mars fuit, ut propius periculum fuerint qui vicerunt.”—LIVY, lib. xxi.



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Sir Tho^s Lawrence, P.R.A.

W. H. Eggleton.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

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HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM

THE COMMENCEMENT OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

TO THE

RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN MDCCCXV

BY

ARCHIBALD ALISON, L.L.D.

F. R. S. E.

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HISTORY OF EUROPE.

CHAPTER XLIX.

ADMINISTRATION OF MARQUIS WELLESLEY, AND FIRST APPEARANCE OF WELLINGTON IN INDIA.

ARTHUR WELLESLEY, afterwards Duke of WELLINGTON, was born in Merion Street, Dublin, in the parish of St Peter's, where his birth is registered, on the 1st May 1769. He was the fourth son of Garret, second Earl of Mornington, and was descended by the mother's side from the Dungannon family, his mother having been Anne, eldest daughter of Viscount Dungannon. His father was a man of polished manners and kind and hospitable disposition, but not distinguished by any remarkable abilities, except a marked genius for music. His mother was a woman of uncommon vigour of mind, so that he forms, with Sir Walter Scott, Napoleon, Mr Pitt, and nearly all the illustrious persons of the last age, another instance among the many which experience must probably have furnished to every observer, that the sons of a family, at least in general, take their intellectual character from the mother's side. The Wellesleys were an old Saxon family long settled in Sussex, and the ancestor of the Irish branch had come over with Henry II. in 1172, to whom he was standard-bearer, and from whose gratitude he received extensive estates in the

CHAP.
XLIX.

1769.

1.

Birth of
Wellington
and Marquis
Wellesley.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1787.

¹ Scherer, i.
1. Gurw. i.
1. Maxwell,
i. 1-7.

counties of Meath and Kildare. Wellington's elder brother, who succeeded to the hereditary honours, was afterwards created MARQUIS WELLESLEY; so that one family enjoyed the rare felicity of giving birth to the statesman whose energetic councils established the empire of England in the Eastern, and the warrior whose immortal deeds proved the salvation of Europe in the western hemisphere.¹

²
Illustrious
men then
rising into
manhood in
England
and France.

The young soldier was regularly educated for the profession of his choice, and received his first commission in the year 1787, being then in the eighteenth year of his age. Napoleon had entered the artillery two years before, at the age of sixteen, and was then musing in lonely meditation on the heroes of Plutarch; Sir Walter Scott, at the age of seventeen, was relieving the tedium of legal education by strolling over the mountains of his native land, and dreaming of Ariosto and Amadis in the grassy vale of St Leonard's, near Edinburgh; Viscount Chateaubriand was inhaling the spirit of devotion and chivalry, and wandering, in anticipation, as a pilgrim to the Holy Land, amidst the solitude of la Vendée; Goethe, profound and imaginative, was reflecting on the destiny of man on earth, and inhaling deep draughts of divine philosophy, destined to be wedded to immortal verse; Schiller was casting on the deathless mirror of the stage the shadows of history and the creations of a noble fancy; and the ardent spirit of Nelson was chafing in inaction, and counting the weary hours of life, on a pacific West Indian station. Little did any of them think of each other, or anticipate the heart-stirring scenes which were so soon about to arise, in the course of which their names were to shine forth like stars in the firmament, and their genius to acquire immortal renown. There were giants in the earth in those days.²

² Scherer,
Life of Wel-
lington.
Lockhart's
Life of
Scott, i.
45, 54.
Southey's
Nelson, i.
73, 77. Cha-
teaub. Mém.
72, 77.

Arthur Wellesley, educated at Eton, studied for a short time at the military academy of Angers, in France, where Napoleon also for some time was placed; but he

was soon removed from that seminary to take a part in the active duties of his profession. As subaltern and captain he served both in the cavalry and infantry : in spring 1793 he was promoted to the majority of the 33d regiment, and in autumn of the same year he became, by purchase, its lieutenant-colonel. At the head of that regiment he first entered upon active service, by sailing from Cork, in May 1794, and landing at Ostend in the beginning of June following, with orders to join Lord Moira's corps, which was assembling in that place, to reinforce the Duke of York, who was in the field near Tournay. That ill-fated prince, however, was then hard pressed by the vast army of the Republicans under Pichegru,* and as he was under the necessity of retreating, it was justly deemed unadvisable to attempt the retention of a fortress so far in advance as Ostend, and Lord Moira with great skill conducted his troops by Bruges and Ghent to the Scheldt, and, crossing that river at the Tête-de-Flandre, joined the English army encamped around Antwerp.¹

The multiplied disasters of that unhappy campaign soon brought Colonel Wellesley into contact with the enemy, and taught him the art of war in the best of all schools, that of great operations and adverse fortune. The English army, now entirely separated from that of the Austrians, who had marched off towards the Rhine, were in no sufficient strength to face the immense masses of the Republicans in any considerable combat ; but a number of detached actions took place on the part of the rearguard, in which the spirit and intelligence of Colonel Wellesley speedily became conspicuous. On the river Neethe, in a warm affair near the village of Boxel, and in a hot skirmish on the shores of the Waal, the 33d did good service ; the ability with which they were conducted excited general remark, and Colonel Wellesley was in consequence promoted to the command of a brigade of

CHAP.
XLIX.

1794.

3.
Wellington's education and first military services.

June 1794.

¹ Gurw. i.
1. Scherer,
i. 23. Maxwell, i. 9-16.

4.

His talents are distinguished during the retreat from Flanders.

Dec. 30,
1794.

Jan. 5, 1795.

Jan. 15.

* *Ante*, Chap. XVI. § 54.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1795.

three regiments in the ulterior retreat from the Lech to the Yssel. They were no longer, indeed, pursued by the enemy, who had turned aside for the memorable invasion of Holland; but the rudeness of the elements proved a more formidable adversary than the bayonets of the Republicans. The route of the army lay through the inhospitable provinces of Guelderland and Overijssel; the country consisted of flat and desert heaths; few houses were to be found on the road, and these scattered, singly, or in small hamlets, affording no shelter to any considerable body of men. Over this dreary tract the British troops marched during the dreadful winter of 1794-5, through an unbroken wilderness of snow, with the thermometer frequently down at 15° and 20° below zero of Fahrenheit, and, when it was somewhat milder, a fierce and biting north wind blowing direct in the faces of the soldiers. In this trying crisis Colonel Wellesley commanded the rearguard; his activity and vigilance arrested in a great degree the disorders which prevailed; and during his first essay in arms, he experienced severities equal to the far-famed horrors of the Moscow retreat.^{1*}

¹ (Gurw. i. 2,
3. Scherer,
i. 4, 5. Max-
well, i. 16-
24.

5.
Excellent
effect of this
campaign on
his mind.

Short as was the first campaign of the Duke of Wellington, it was the best school that had been presented for nearly a century for the formation of a great commander. War was there exhibited on a grand scale: it was in an army of sixty-eight battalions and eighty squadrons that he had served. The indomitable courage and admirable spirit of the British soldiers had, amid its disasters, appeared in their full lustre; but the natural results of these great qualities were completely checked by the defects, at that period, of their military organisation. Total ignorance of warlike measures in the cabinet which planned their movements; a destructive minuteness of direction, arising from too little confidence on the part of government in their generals in the field; a

* "The cold in Russia, during 1812, never fell so low as in Holland during the winter of 1794-5."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoleon*, iv. 74.

general want of experience in officers of all ranks in the most ordinary operations of a campaign ; and, above all, the ruinous parsimony which, in all states not essentially military, subject to a really popular government, breaks down, on the return of peace, the military force by which alone, on the next resumption of hostilities, early success can be secured—paralysed all the courage of the troops. These defects appeared in painful contrast to the brilliant and efficient state of the more experienced German armies, which, with national resources nowise superior, and troops far inferior both in courage and energy, were able to keep the field with more perseverance, and, in the end, achieve successes which the British soldiers could hardly hope to accomplish. These considerations forcibly impressed themselves on the mind of the young officer ; and he was early led to revolve in his mind those necessary changes in the direction and discipline of the army, which, matured by the diligence and vigour of the Duke of York, ultimately led the British nation to an unparalleled pitch of strength and glory.¹

CHAP.
XLIX.
1797.

¹ Scherer,
i. 6, 10.

It was not long before an opportunity presented itself for witnessing the capability of British soldiers when subjected to abler direction, and led by more experienced officers. After the return of the troops from Flanders to England, the 33d regiment was ordered to the West Indies ; but contrary winds prevented the transports in which it was embarked from sailing, and their destination was soon after changed for the East. Colonel Wellesley arrived with his corps at Calcutta in January 1797. During the voyage out, it was observed that he spent most of his time in reading ; and after he landed in India, he was indefatigable in acquiring information regarding the situation and resources of the country in which he was to serve. Such use did he make of these opportunities, that when he was called, as he early was, to high command, he was perfectly acquainted, as his correspondence from the first demon-

6.
Colonel
Wellesley
sent to
India, and
first entry
on com-
mand there.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1798.

strates, both with the peculiarities of Indian warfare, and the intricacies of Indian politics. At his first interview with Sir John Shore after he landed, that experienced observer showed his discernment of character by the remark, "If Colonel Wellesley should ever have the opportunity of distinguishing himself, he will do it, and greatly." And when his division of the army took the field in January 1799, against Tippoo Sultaun, the fine condition and perfect discipline of the men, as well as the skill and judgment of the arrangements made for their supplies, called forth the warm commendations of the commander-in-chief, who little thought of what a hero he was then ushering the name into the world.*

¹ Gurw. i. 2,
3. Scher. i.
9, 10. Wel.
Desp. i. 425.
Pearce's
Life of Wel-
lesley, i.
308.

During the campaign which followed, he had little time for study, and still fewer facilities for the transport of books; his library consisted of only two volumes, but they were eminently descriptive of his future character and principles—the Bible and Cæsar's Commentaries.^{1†}

7.
His charac-
ter as a
public man.

The name of no commander in the long array of British greatness will occupy so large a space in the annals of the world as that of Wellington; and yet there are few whose public character possesses, with so many excellences, so simple and unblemished a complexion. It is to the purity and elevation of his principles, in every public situation, that this enviable distinction is to be ascribed. Intrusted early in life with high command, and subjected from the first to serious responsibility,

* "I have much satisfaction in acquainting your Lordship, that the very handsome appearance and perfect discipline of the troops under the orders of the Hon. Col. Wellesley, do honour to themselves and to him; while the judicious and masterly arrangements as to supplies, which opened an abundant free market, and inspired confidence into dealers of every description, were no less creditable to Colonel Wellesley than advantageous to the public service, and deservedly entitle him to my marked approbation." How early is the real character of great men shown, when once thrown into important situations! This might have passed for a description of Wellington's arrangements for the supply of his army in the south of France in spring 1814.—GENERAL HARRIS to the Governor-general in Council, Feb. 2, 1799; WELLESLEY'S *Despatches*, i. 425.

† This interesting fact I learned from my highly esteemed friend Lord Ashley, who received it from the Duke himself.

he possessed that singleness of heart and integrity of purpose which, even more than talent or audacity, are the foundation of true moral courage, and can alone conduct to public greatness. A sense of duty, a feeling of honour, a generous patriotism, a forgetfulness of self, constituted the spring of all his actions. He was ambitious, but it was to serve his king and country only; fearless, because his whole heart was bound up in these noble objects; disinterested, because the enriching of himself or his family never for a moment crossed his mind; insensible to private fame when it interfered with public duty; indifferent to popular obloquy when it arose from rectitude of conduct. Like the Roman patriot, he wished rather to be than to appear deserving: "*Esse quam videri bonus malebat, ita quo minus gloriam petebat eo magis adsequebatur.*"¹* Greatness was

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¹ Sallust,
Bell. Cat.

* "He strove rather to be than to appear deserving; thus, the less he sought after glory, the more he attained it."

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8.
His military
character.

citizens;* and it is hard to say whether his greatness appeared most when he struck down the conqueror of Europe on the field of Waterloo, or when he was himself with difficulty rescued from death on its anniversary, eighteen years afterwards, on the streets of London.

A constant recollection of these circumstances, and of the peculiar and very difficult task which was committed to his charge, is necessary to the forming a correct estimate of the Duke of Wellington's military achievements. The brilliancy of his course is well known. An unbroken series of triumphs from Vimeira to Toulouse; the entire expulsion of the French from the Peninsula; the planting of the British standard in the heart of France; the successive defeat of those veteran marshals who had so long conquered in every country in Europe; the overthrow of Waterloo; the hurling of Napoleon from his throne; and the termination, in one day, of the military empire founded on twenty years of conquest. But these results, great and imperishable as they are, convey no adequate idea, either of the difficulties with which Wellington had to contend, or of the merit due to his transcendent exertions. With an army seldom superior in number to a single corps of the French marshals; with troops dispirited by recent disaster, and wholly unaided by practical experience; without any compulsory law to recruit his ranks, or any strong national passion for war to supply its want—he was called on to combat successively vast armies, composed in great part of veteran soldiers, perpetually filled by the terrible powers of the conscription, headed by chiefs who, risen from the ranks, and practically acquainted with the duties of war in all its grades, had fought their way from the grenadier's musket to the marshal's baton, and were followed by men who,

* "Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus instantis tyranni,
Mente quatit solidâ."

HORACE, *Odes*, iii. 3.

trained in the same school, were animated by the same ambition.

Still more, he was the general of a nation in which the chivalrous and mercantile qualities are strangely blended together; which, justly proud of its historic glory, is unreasonably jealous of its present expenditure; which, covetous in war of military renown, is impatient in peace of previous preparation; which starves its establishments when danger is over, and yet frets at defeat when its terrors are instant; which fires in strife on Cressy and Azincour, and ruminates, at rest, on economic reduction. He combated at the head of an alliance formed of heterogeneous states, composed of discordant materials, in which ancient animosities were hardly forgotten in present danger, or religious divisions in national fervour; in which corruption often paralysed the arm of patriotism, and jealousy withheld the resources of power. He acted under the direction of a ministry which, albeit zealous and active, was alike inexperienced in hostility and unskilled in combination; in presence of an Opposition, which, powerful in eloquence, supported by faction, was prejudiced against the war, and indefatigable in endeavouring to arrest it; for the interests of a people who, although ardent in the cause and enthusiastic in its support, were impatient of disaster and prone to depression, and whose military resources, how great soever, were dissipated in the protection of a colonial empire which encircled the earth.

Nothing but the most consummate prudence, as well as ability in conduct, could, with such means, have achieved victory over such an enemy; but the character of Wellington was singularly fitted for the task. Capable, when the occasion required, or opportunity was afforded, of the most daring enterprises, he was yet cautious and wary in his general conduct; prodigal of his own labour, regardless of his own person, he was avaricious only of the blood of his soldiers. Endowed by nature with an indomitable soul

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9.

Great difficulties with which he had to contend in that capacity.

10.

Admirable ability and skill with which he overcame them.

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and a constitution of iron, he possessed that tenacity of purpose and indefatigable activity, which is ever necessary to great achievements; prudent in council, sagacious in design, he was yet prompt and decided in action. His activity in war was unwearied; his frame capable of enduring unbounded fatigue. At any hour of the day he could lie down, wrapped in his military cloak, among the troops, and snatch an hour's sleep; at any hour of the night he was ready to receive despatches, and coolly gave orders for any emergency.* No general ever revolved the probable dangers of an enterprise more anxiously before undertaking it; none possessed in a higher degree the eagle eye, the arm of steel, necessary to carry it into execution. None more completely answered the description which ancient genius has left of the greatest general of antiquity.† By the steady application of this rare combination of qualities, he was enabled to raise the British military force from an unworthy state of depression to an unparalleled pitch of glory; to educate, in presence of the enemy, not only his soldiers in the field, but his rulers in the cabinet; to silence, by avoiding disaster, the clamour of his enemies; to strengthen, by progressive success, the ascendancy of his friends; to augment, by the exhibition of its results, the energy of the government; to rouse, by deeds of glory, the enthusiasm of the people. Skilfully seizing the opportunity of victory, he studiously avoided the chances of defeat: aware that a single disaster would at once endanger his prospects, discourage his countrymen, and strengthen his opponents, he was content

* On one occasion, during a retreat in the Peninsula, an officer arrived in haste at headquarters during the night, when the Duke, then Earl of Wellington, was asleep. Being brought in, the Duke said, "Well, sir, what news do you bring?" "We have been much distressed, my Lord," replied he; "the enemy were very strong, and pressed us very hard." "Your men, I am afraid, must be very much fatigued?" "Dead beat, my Lord." "Then the French must be dead beat also: there will be no attack to-night. Good-night, sir." And in five minutes he was sound asleep.

† "Plurimum audaciæ ad pericula capessenda, plurimum consilii inter ipsa pericula erat: nullo labore aut corpus fatigari, aut animus vinci poterat.

to forego many opportunities of earning fame, and stifle many desires to grasp at glory ; magnanimously checking the aspirations of genius, he trusted for ultimate success rather to perseverance in a wise, than audacity in a daring course. He thus succeeded, during six successive campaigns, with a comparatively inconsiderable army, in maintaining his ground against the vast and veteran forces of Napoleon, in defeating nearly all his marshals, and baffling successively all his enterprises, and finally in rousing such an enthusiastic spirit in the British empire, as enabled its government to put forth its immense resources on a scale worthy of its present greatness and ancient renown, and terminate a contest of twenty years by planting the British standard on the walls of Paris.

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To have given birth to such a man is a sufficient distinction for one family ; but Wellington is not the only illustrious character which England owes to the house of Mornington. It is hard to say whether, in a different line, in the management of the cabinet, the civil government of men, and the far-seeing sagacity of a consummate statesman, MARQUIS WELLESLEY is not equally remarkable. He was born in the year 1760, the eldest son of the family, and gave early promise, both at school and college, of those brilliant qualities which afterwards shone forth with such lustre in the administration of India. Educated like his brother Arthur at Eton, he inhaled amidst its classic shades that delicacy of taste, and proficiency in the composition of the ancient languages, for which that seminary has long been celebrated.* He

11.
Character of
Marquis
Wellesley.

Caloris ac frigoris patientia par : cibi potionisque desiderio naturali, non voluptate, modus finitus : vigiliarum somnique nec die nec nocte discriminata tempora. Id, quod gerendis rebus superesset, quieti datum : ea neque molli strato neque silentio arcessita. Multi sæpe militari sagulo opertum, humi jacentem inter custodias stationesque militum, conspexerunt."—LIVY, xxi. c. 4.

* Lord Wellesley's first contribution to the *Musa Etonensis* is dated 1778, and bears the motto, *Ἀμυνεσθαι περὶ πατρὸς*—so early is the character developed in life. The concluding lines are prophetic of the destiny of his family :—

"Quid memorem, qualem sub libertate Brittanna
Terra tulit prolem ? Satis æquora subdita ponti,

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retained these accomplishments undiminished throughout his whole eventful career, and attained such skill in them as raised him to the very highest rank as a scholar in the age of Porson and Parr. When he entered on active life, his talents for business soon introduced him to the notice of government; but his predilection was so strongly evinced from the first for Oriental affairs, that nature appeared to have expressly formed him for the command of the East. At an age when most of his contemporaries were acquainted with the affairs of India only through the uncertain medium of distant report, or the casual hints of private conversation, he was fully master of the politics of Hindostan, and had already formed those clear and luminous views of the condition and situation of our power there, which enabled him, from the very outset of his career, to direct with so steady a hand the complicated mazes of Indian diplomacy. He had for several years been an active member of the board of control, then under the able direction of Lord Melville, and had acquired, from his remarkable proficiency in the subject, a large share in the confidence of government. But it was not in any of the public offices, it was not from the inspiration of Leadenhall Street, that he drew the enlarged and statesmanlike views which from the first characterised his Eastern administration. It was in the solitude of study that the knowledge was obtained; it was from the sages and historians of antiquity that the spirit was inhaled; it was in the fire of his own genius that the light was found.*

Atque avulsa dolens nudatis lilia parmis
 Gallia, et infracti toties testantur Iberi
 Virtutem patrum, et generis molimina nostri.
 At nec adhuc sacra libertas, neque vividus ardor,
 Anglicos intra fines èt pristina regna,
 Tam prorsus periere; manet, manet illa juventæ,
 Vis animi, et flammæ scintilla relicta prioris,
Quæ jam fulmineo Gallorum Marte superbas
Frangat opes, nostrisque minantes arceat agris."

PEARCE'S *Life of Wellesley*, i. 14.

* Lord Wellesley, like many other men of energetic and refined minds, was

The maxims on which Marquis Wellesley acted in the East, were identical with those which Napoleon perceived to be indispensable to his existence in Europe, and which in former times had given the Romans the empire of the world. He at once discerned that the British sway in India was founded entirely on opinion; that twenty or thirty thousand Europeans, scattered among a hundred millions of Asiatics, must have acquired their supremacy by fascinating the mind; that this moral sway could be maintained only by fidelity to engagement, and fearlessness in conduct; and that, in such circumstances, the most prudent course was generally the most audacious. Disregarding, therefore, entirely that temporising policy which the government at home had taken such pains to impress upon its Asiatic viceroys, which Cornwallis had triumphed over only by disregarding, and Sir John Shore had obeyed only to destroy, he resolved, at all hazards, to maintain the British faith inviolate, to strike terror into his enemies by the vigour of his measures, and secure victory by never

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12.

Character of
his Indian
administra-
tion.

of a highly romantic turn. Early in life, shortly after he left Eton, he had gone down to the neighbourhood of the New Forest to study, and there met with a young and beautiful lady, the daughter of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, for whom he conceived a strong attachment, which, as may easily be believed, was returned. She soon after went to Paris, whither he followed her; but her death there put a period to their friendship. Sixty years afterwards, after he had been governor-general of India, and foreign minister in England, he returned an old man to the same spot. There he used to drive out in the morning to the well-known scenes, and, leaving the carriage and servant at a distance, visit alone the trees, the paths, the turf banks hallowed by such associations. "Who," says Bulwer, "can say that the mind is not influenced by the scene, the place, where we first dwelt with the beloved one? Every object there is hallowed by associations which the place only can recall. The past by which it is haunted seems to prescribe a like constancy for the future. If a thought less kind, less trustful, has entered in, the sight of a tree beneath which a vow has been exchanged, a tear kissed away, recalls again the hours of the first divine illusion." But the novelist did not contemplate such constancy in a statesman of eighty, after sixty years' separation, and India saved, Napoleon conquered, in the interim. So much does the strength of attachment in men of heroic minds in real life exceed all that romance has figured. These interesting particulars were communicated to me by my esteemed friend, Mr Montgomery Martin, Lord Wellesley's private secretary. Lord Wellesley's habits in the intervening period were occasionally very different, and at times he was the slave of irregular passion; but all acquainted with human nature know how frequently in the close of life the mind reverts to the recollections and feelings of youth.

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13.
Statesman-
like wisdom
by which it
was charac-
terised.

despairing, and being always worthy of it. He recollected the words of Cato—"Quanto vos attentiores agetis, tanto illis animus infirmior erit ; si paullulum modo vos languere viderint, jam omnes feroces aderunt." *

But vigour and resolution are not alone capable of achieving success, though they are generally essential towards it : wisdom in combination, foresight in council, prudence in preparation, are also indispensable ; and it was in the union of these invaluable qualities with the courage of the hero and the heart of the patriot, that Marquis Wellesley was unrivalled. Boldly assuming the lead, he kept it without difficulty, because he was felt to be the first ; ardently devoted to his country, he inspired a portion of the sacred fire into all his followers ; † discerning in the estimation of character, he selected from the many men in his service the most gifted ; penetrated with the most lofty as well as the soundest views, he communicated his own statesmanlike principles both to the direction of the councils and the guidance of the armies of India. In vigour of resolution, moral courage, diplomatic ability, and military combination, he was the first of British statesmen, even in the days of Pitt and Fox. Never, perhaps, in so short a time, was such a change produced on the character of public administration, the vigour of national councils, or the success of national arms, as by his Eastern rule. He found them vacillating, he left them decided ; he found the public service weakened by corruption, he left it teeming with energy ; he found the East India Company striving only to defend their possessions on the coast, he left them

* "The more vigorous you are, the more panic-struck will they become ; if they see you, even for a very little, hesitate in your course, they will all with fierce assaults be upon you."

† "So entirely devoted am I," said Lord Wellesley, "to the indispensable duty of providing a large force in the field and an efficient system of alliance, that my estimate of character, and my sentiments of respect and even of affection, in this country, are regulated absolutely by the degree of zeal and alacrity which I find in those who are to assist me in this great struggle. Nor can I conceive a more firm foundation, or a more honourable bond of friend-

seated on the throne of Aurengzebe. So vast a change, effected in a few years, is one of the most remarkable instances which history affords of the impress which a lofty character can communicate to the sphere of its influence ; and, like the corresponding and simultaneous elevation of France under the guidance of Napoleon, may tend to modify the ideas which philosophic minds are apt to entertain of the entire government of human affairs by general causes, and to make us suspect that, in working out its mysterious designs, Providence not unfrequently makes use of the agency of individual greatness.

Another statesman, possessed of less brilliant but still important qualities, presided over the direction of Indian affairs in this country during the most momentous period of Lord Wellesley's government, and had long contributed essentially, by the enlarged and statesmanlike views with which he himself was impressed, to train the mind of the future ruler of the East to those great conceptions which from the very first distinguished his administration. HENRY DUNDAS, afterwards LORD VISCOUNT MELVILLE, was descended from the house of Arniston, in Scotland — a family which, since the Revolution, had enjoyed a large share of the legal honours and offices in that country — and had early risen, alike from his talents and his connexions, to the office of Lord Advocate. But his force of mind and ambition impelled him into a more elevated career. In 1776, he entered parliament as member for his native county, Mid-Lothian, and from that time, for the next twenty-five years, he enjoyed, to a greater degree than any other person, the confidence and friendship of Mr Pitt. In

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14.
Character of
Lord Mel-
ville.

ship, than a common share in the labours, difficulties, and honour of defending and saving so valuable a part of the British empire. This is the nature of the connexion which I seek with your Lordship, and these are the sentiments which render me so averse to those men who appear negligent, or reluctant, or irresolute in a conjuncture which ought to extinguish all partialities, all private resentments and affections, and unite and animate all talents and exertions in one common cause." — MARQUIS WELLESLEY to LORD CLIVE, *Governor of Madras*, 14th Nov. 1798 — WELLESLEY'S *Despatches*, 344.

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1792, he was promoted to the important situation of President of the Board of Control, and from that period down to Mr Pitt's retirement in 1800, had the almost exclusive direction of Eastern affairs. When that great man resumed the helm in 1804, he was made First Lord of the Admiralty, and by his indefatigable energy soon restored the navy from the state of decay into which it had fallen under the short-sighted parsimony of the Addington administration : so that the same statesman enjoyed the rare distinction of framing the policy which produced Lord Wellesley's triumphs in India, and launching the fleets which extinguished the navy of France amidst the shoals of Trafalgar.

15.
His great
abilities and
vast infor-
mation on
Indian
affairs.

Lord Melville's talents were of a high order ; but they were of the solid and useful rather than the brilliant and attractive kind. A powerful debater from strength of intellect and vigour of thought, he overcame by these qualities the disadvantages of a northern accent, a deficiency in imaginative or oratorical qualities, and the prejudices against his country, which were general in England, till the genius of Sir Walter Scott, and the increasing intercourse between the two nations, converted it into a sometimes indulgent partiality. But if he could not rival Fox or Sheridan in the fire of genius or graces of eloquence, he excelled them in many sterling qualities which constitute a great statesman ; and the want of which is too often, to its grievous loss, thought to be compensated in Great Britain by the more showy but inferior accomplishments which command and seduce a popular assembly. To vast powers of application, he united a sound judgment and a retentive memory ; the native force of his mind made him seize at once the strong points of a subject, while his prodigious information enabled him thoroughly to master its details. Nowhere is to be found a more comprehensive and statesmanlike series of instructions than is presented in his Indian correspondence : it has been declared by

an equally competent judge and unbiassed opponent, that in these and Marquis Wellesley's despatches is to be sought the whole materials both of history and information on our Eastern dominions.¹ All the features of Lord Wellesley's administration are to be found in them chalked out with prophetic wisdom, even before that illustrious man left the British shores. The true principles of colonial government are there developed with a master's hand and a statesman's wisdom; all the subsequent measures of the governor-general obtained the cordial support of this able auxiliary in the British cabinet. It may safely be affirmed, that if England ever lose the empire of the seas, it will be from departing from his maxims in the management of the navy; if she is stripped of her Indian empire, from forgetting his principles of colonial administration.*

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¹ Lord
Brougham,
Edin. Re-
view, No.
139.

The general objects of Marquis Wellesley's policy are clearly pointed out in his letters from the Cape of Good Hope, in February 1798, to Lord Melville; a series of state papers drawn up before he had set foot in India, which will bear comparison with any in the world for sound and enlarged views of complicated politics. He at once perceived that the advantages of the triple alliance against Tippoo Sultaun, and the consideration acquired by the glorious victory of Lord Cornwallis

16.
Lord Wel-
lesley's first
objects of
policy, and
early percep-
tion of the
necessity of
war.

* "It is of the last importance to keep up the means of a large importation from India; not only from the encouragement it affords to the navigation and shipping of the kingdom, and the addition which it makes annually to the wealth and capital of the country, and being a fruitful source of revenue, but its necessity as immediately connected with the prosperity of our Indian provinces. It is to the *increased exports from India to Europe that we are to attribute the increase of Indian prosperity, industry, population, and revenue*; and the manufacturers of that country would immediately be reduced to a deplorable state, if any check were ever given to their annual exports to this country."—LORD MELVILLE to LORD WELLESLEY, August 1799; WEL. Desp. ii. 102. It is on this principle, a *fair reciprocity of advantages*, that all really wise colonial administration must be founded, and by it alone that such distant possessions can be permanently preserved; but how different is this view from the sacrifice of all colonial interests to *cheap purchasing by the mother state*, which, under the free-trade system, has almost exclusively regulated our policy for the last fifteen years!

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before Seringapatam, had been in a great measure lost by the timid policy of the succeeding administration ; and therefore the first object of his endeavours was to recover the ascendancy which had been so unhappily impaired, and take measures against the powers which had risen after its overthrow. The destruction of the French subsidiary force at Hyderabad, and restoration of our influence at the court of the Nizam ; the arrangement by mediation of the differences among the Mahratta powers ; the renewal of the league which was to prove a counterpoise to the ascendancy of Tippoo ; and the isolation of his territories, if hostilities became unavoidable, from the coast, so as to detach him from French intrigue or co-operation, were the objects which presented themselves to his mind, not so much as steps to power as essentials to existence.¹

¹ Wel. Desp. to Lord Melville, Feb. 28, 1798, i. 1, 34, 81, 91.

17.

He is unable, from financial and military difficulties, to commence immediate hostilities.

No sooner had he landed in India than he perceived that the open alliance of Tippoo with the French, joined to the success of their expedition to Egypt, and the increase to their influence among the native powers which Napoleon's victories had produced, rendered an early attack on the Mysore chief indispensable.* Had he possessed the means, he would immediately have commenced hostilities, as at that time the Sultaun's preparations were not fully completed ; but unfortunately the state of the government finances and military establishment at Madras, where the principal efforts required to be made, rendered that altogether impracticable. So

* Sir Thomas Munro, one of the ablest men that Great Britain ever produced, or India developed, was of the same opinion at this period. " Men read books," says he, " and because they find all warlike nations have had their downfall, they declaim against conquest as not only dangerous but unprofitable ; but there are times and situations where conquest not only brings a revenue greatly beyond its expenses, but also additional security. Let us advance to the Kistna ; we shall triple our revenue, our barrier will then be both stronger and shorter. The dissensions and revolutions of the native governments will point out the time when it is proper for us to become actors. While Tippoo's power exists, we shall be perpetually in danger of losing what we have."—SIR THOS. MUNRO to EARL OF MORNINGTON, June 7, 1798 ; MUNRO'S *Memoirs*, i. 234 ; and AUBER, ii. 174.

low had the credit of the Company fallen at that presidency, that their eight per cent paper had sunk to a discount of eighteen or twenty per cent; the finances, both there and at Bombay, were completely exhausted; the present deficit was eighteen lacs of pagodas, (£480,000); bills designed to supply the want of specie had multiplied so much that they had become alarmingly depreciated; only fourteen thousand men of all arms could be drawn together for the attack on Tippoo; a war was pronounced impracticable without at least six months' preparation; the frontier fortresses were without provisions, the army without stores, equipment, or transport train; and, so far from being in a condition to equip it for the field, the government had hardly the means of moving it from Madras to the Mysore territory. These evils were also felt, though in a lesser degree, at Calcutta; the general treasury was drained by the incessant demands of the sister presidencies, and that general despondency prevailed which is so often both the forerunner and the cause of national disaster.^{1*}

¹ Mem. of Madras government, 6th July 1798. Wellesley's Desp. i. 72, 79, 191.

But it soon appeared how powerful is the influence of a gifted and magnanimous mind upon national fortunes, if called into action at a time when the heart of the nation is sound, and those symptoms of debility have arisen, not from the decline of public virtue, but from the timidity or misdirection of those who have been placed at the head of affairs. Many months had not elapsed before Lord Wellesley had communicated the impress of

18.
Rapid effect of Lord Wellesley's administration in improving affairs.

* "Tippoo Suldaun having manifested," said Lord Wellesley, "the most hostile dispositions towards us; he possesses an army of which a considerable portion is in a state of readiness; he has increased the number of his French officers; and he may receive further assistance from the corps commanded by French officers in the service of the Nizam, of Scindiah, and many other native powers. He may be assisted by the invasion of Zemaun Shah, and by the direct co-operation of Scindiah. On the other hand, our protecting force on the coast of Coromandel cannot be put in motion within a shorter space than six months, even for the purpose of defending the Carnatic; our allies, meanwhile, are utterly unable to fulfil their defensive engagements towards us—the Peishwa being depressed and kept in check by the invasion of Scindiah, and the Nizam by the vicinity of that chieftain's army, and the overbearing influence

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his zeal and energy to every branch of the public service. Disregarding altogether the sinister forebodings and gloomy representations of the Madras government, he laboured assiduously to augment the military force and restore the financial resources of that important part of our Eastern dominions : by never yielding to difficulties, he soon found none ; by boldly assuming the lead in diplomacy, he speedily acquired the command. The intrepid no longer feared to discharge their duty ; they were sure that, if honestly performed, they would be supported. All classes, both at home and abroad, rapidly discovered the character of the man with whom they were now brought in contact. British patriotism was roused by the clear indications, which were afforded, of capacity at the head of affairs ; Asiatic hostility sank before the ascendant of European talent, Indian jealousy before the force of English courage. The army was rapidly augmented ; the frontier fortresses were armed and victualled ; the bullock service and commissariat put on a respectable footing ; a powerful battering train was collected at Madras ; voluntary subscriptions, on a magnificent scale, at all the three presidencies, bespoke at once the public spirit and opulence of the inhabitants ; corps of European volunteers were formed, and soon acquired a great degree of efficiency ; while a subsidiary treaty, concluded with the Nizam in the beginning of September, restored the British influence at the court of Hyderabad, and gave public proof of the renewal of British influence among the native powers. As

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of an army commanded by French officers, and established in the centre of the Deccan. While we remain in this situation, without a soldier prepared to take the field in the Carnatic, or an ally to assist our operations in the event of an attack from Tippoo, we leave the fate of the Carnatic to the discretion of Tippoo ; we suffer the cause of France to acquire hourly accessions of strength in every quarter of India ; we abandon our allies, the Nizam and the Peishwa, to the mercy of Scindiah and Tippoo, in conjunction with the French ; and we leave to France the ready means of obtaining a large territorial revenue, and a permanent establishment in the Deccan, founded upon the destruction of our alliances."—*Minute of the Governor-general, Aug. 1798* ; WELLESLEY'S *Despatches*, i. 191, 192.

usual, however, these vigorous measures were not adopted, without exciting the usual amount of dismay and consternation among that class, numerous in all countries, whose only resource on the approach of danger is to deny its existence. Mr Weber, the secretary of the government, and General Harris, the commander-in-chief of the army of Coromandel, were equally loud in their condemnations of Lord Wellesley's measures; and the former contemplated nothing less than the *impeachment* of the governor-general for his temerity.^{1*}

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¹ Wel. Desp. ii. 226, and i. 355. Auber, ii. 179. Pearce's Wellesley, i. 202.

The first vigorous stroke was directed against the French subsidiary force, now fourteen thousand strong, which had so long exercised a domineering influence at the court of the Nizam. Fortunately for the interests of England, the same overbearing character which has in every age made the permanent rule of the French insupportable to a vanquished people, had already manifested itself; and the Nizam, now reposing confidence in the support of the English government, had become exceedingly desirous of ridding himself of his obnoxious defenders. By the new treaty of Hyderabad, the British subsidiary troops, formerly two thousand, were to be augmented to six thousand men; and they were under the direction of Colonel Kirkpatrick, an officer whose skill and prudence were equal to the difficult and important task committed to his charge. The increased force entered the Nizam's territories in the beginning of October, reached his capital on the 10th, joined a large body of the Nizam's horse, and surrounded the French camp on

19.
Successful reduction of the French subsidiary forces at Hyderabad. Oct. 22.

Atlas,
Plate 47.

* "I can anticipate nothing but shocking disasters from a premature attack upon Tippoo in our present disabled condition, and the *impeachment* of Lord Mornington for his temerity." Mr Weber's words.—PEARCE'S *Life of Wellesley*, i. 203. "Tippoo's inveteracy at us will only end with his life, and he will always seize any opportunity that may occur to annoy us. But notwithstanding this, and that the political circumstances of India are now much in our favour, it perhaps still remains a matter of serious consideration, whether, in our very great want of cash, and the effect our going to war in this country must have on the affairs of Europe, it would not be better to let him make the *amende honorable* if so inclined, than that we should avail ourselves of the error he has run into to punish him for his insolence. *An attack*

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1793.

¹ Lord Wel-
lesley to
Court of
Directors,
Nov. 21,
1798. Desp.
i. 356.

the 22d. A mutiny had broken out in the corps on the preceding day, and the sepoys had arrested their officers. In this state of insubordination, no authority existed capable of withstanding the British troops; and the whole French officers were, without bloodshed, delivered up to the English authorities, on condition of private property being preserved, and their being forthwith transported to France—conditions which were immediately and faithfully executed.¹

20.
Its great
effects in
India.

This bold and important stroke was very soon attended with the most important effects. The French influence at the native courts received a rude shock, while that of the English was proportionally augmented. The natives of the subsidiary corps almost all entered the British ranks, and formed an important addition to the sepoy force; while the Nizam, overjoyed at his delivery from such supercilious defenders as those from whom he had now been rescued, renewed his ancient and cordial alliance with the East India Company. It soon appeared how necessary this decisive stroke had been, and what was the magnitude of the dangers which would soon have assailed the British power, if the war had not in this manner been at once carried into the enemy's territory. Secret information was received that Scindiah had entered into correspondence with Tippoo and the French; the Peishwa was ascertained to have supported his views against the Company and the Nizam; the inveterate hostility of the Sultaun of Mysore was well known, and his preparations, though secretly conducted, were daily assuming a more formidable character. Zemaun Shah, and the terrors of an Affghaun invasion, operated as a powerful diversion, and rendered it necessary to station a large force on the northern frontiers of Hindostan. He had crossed the Indus at Attock, the

is now more likely to end in discomfiture than victory. On my part, your lordship may depend on following your instructions implicitly."—GENERAL HARRIS to LORD MORNINGTON, 23d June 1798; PEARCE, i. 203.

place where Alexander passed that river, and reached Lahore, where, on the first reverse to the British, the formidable force of the Sikhs would be ready to co-operate with him for the expulsion of the infidels. A deep-laid plot was on foot for expelling the English from Bengal, Bahar, and all their provinces on the banks of the Ganges, in which most of the Mahommedan chiefs of those countries were implicated; while the whole Mahratta potentates were secretly intriguing against the British power, and only awaited the expected arrival of the French from Egypt, to join openly in the general confederacy against it.¹

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¹ Lord Wellesley to General Harris, 23d Feb. 1799, Desp. i. 581; and to the Directors, 22d April 1799, *Ibid.* i. 535. Pearce, i. 244.

The indefatigable activity and commanding energy of Lord Wellesley, however, enabled him to make head against all these difficulties; and he soon made such progress in the military preparations as enabled him, early in 1799, to anticipate the designs of his enemies, by striking a decisive blow at the heart of their power. The army collected at Madras was raised, before the close of the preceding year, to thirty thousand fighting men, with an immense battering train—a noble force, in an incomparable state of discipline and equipment; while a co-operating body of six thousand men, in equally admirable condition, was ready to advance from Bombay under General Stuart. Explanations were demanded from Tippoo regarding his hostile measures, particularly his sending ambassadors to the Isle of France;* but no reply was received, although the English government gave ample proof of their disposition to act with fidelity in conformity with the existing treaties, by relinquishing

21.
Wellesley collects an army for the attack on Mysore.

* *Ante*, chap. XLVIII, § 53, note.—Such was Tippoo's dissimulation and perfidy that, in his letter to Lord Wellesley of 2d August 1798, he said, "By the favour of God, *bonds of friendship and union obtain between the two states*; and I am to the last degree disposed to give additional strength to the beneficial system of amity and peace." On 4th August 1798, just *two days* after this letter was written, were framed the specific conditions of an offensive alliance against the British, accompanied with solicitations to the French Directory, and to the government of the Isle of France, to send an auxiliary force to aid in the conquest of India, which were found in the archives of Seringapatam.—PEARCE'S *Life of Wellesley*, i. 211.

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to him, at this very crisis, the territory of Wynaad, a disputed district which, on Lord Wellesley's arrival in India, was in the possession of the British authorities without any adequate title. A proposition on the part of the governor-general to open an amicable negotiation through Major Doveton, having been eluded with characteristic artifice* by the Suldaun, and the military preparations being complete, Marquis Wellesley, early in January, proceeded to Madras in person; and on the 10th of February the army, under General Harris, entered the Mysore territory; while, shortly before, General Stuart had also advanced with his co-operating force from the side of Bombay.¹

¹ Wel. Desp.
i. 452, 466,
478.

22.
Tippoo's
means of
defence.

Notwithstanding the depth and extent of his plans, Tippoo was on this occasion taken by surprise. He had not anticipated the vigour and celerity of the new governor-general, and calculated upon being permitted to choose his own time, as on former occasions, from the supineness of government, for the commencement of hostilities. Had he been permitted to do so, he would have deferred the opening of the campaign till his preparations were complete, and the extensive confederacy in the course of formation was encouraged by the presence of a French auxiliary force. His military power, however, was already very great. Seringapatam was in a formidable state of defence, and he had above fifty thousand men in a central position, under arms. Finding, therefore, that his territories were menaced on two sides at once, he judiciously resolved to direct his efforts, in the first instance, against the least considerable of the invading armies; and with that view moved against General Stuart, even before he had crossed the Bombay frontier, and five days before

* Tippoo wrote in answer to the communication announcing Major Doveton's mission,—“that being frequently disposed to *make excursions and hunt*, he was accordingly *proceeding upon a hunting excursion*; but that he would be pleased that the governor-general would be so good as to despatch Major Doveton to him unattended, or slightly attended.” *Tippoo to the Governor-general, Feb. 9, 1799.*—WELLESLEY'S *Despatches*, i. 452.

General Harris entered Mysore. The Sultaun's force on this occasion amounted to twelve thousand men, the flower of his army; but though the weight of the contest fell on two thousand European and sepoy troops, he was defeated after a violent struggle of three hours' duration, and quickly retired to the neighbourhood of Seringapatam, with the loss of fifteen hundred killed and wounded.¹

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¹ Wel. Desp.
i. 505, 506.
Scherer, i.
21, 23.

The progress of the grand army, thirty thousand strong, which advanced from the side of Madras, was at first very slow, owing to the immense battering and siege equipage which followed in its train, the enormous multitude of camp-followers which constantly encumber an Indian army, and the sickness which almost uniformly seizes the transport cattle when they leave the coast and ascend the high table-land of Mysore. They experienced, however, very little molestation from the Sultaun until the 27th March, when a general engagement took place. Tippoo's army occupied a range of heights beyond the little town of Malavelly; and a distant exchange of cannon-shot from the batteries on either side at length led to a general action. He had above 50,000 men, and 180 guns, under his orders.* Colonel Wellesley (Wellington) commanded the division on the left, and General Floyd the cavalry in the centre. Harris himself was on the right. Owing to the exhausted state of the bullocks which drew the artillery, a delay occurred in the formation of the line, of which the Mysore infantry took advantage to make a daring charge on Colonel Wellesley's division, which moved on to the attack, and was considerably in advance, separated by a wide gap from the centre; while a large

23.
Progress of
General
Harris's
army.

* Tippoo's force was as follows:—

Regular infantry,	.	.	.	.	30,000
Guards,	.	.	.	.	4,000
Regular horse,	.	.	.	.	6,000
Irregular horse,	.	.	.	.	7,000
Carnatic Peons,	8,000
					<hr/>
					55,000

Field-pieces, 144; heavy guns, 36.

—PEARCE, i. 293, note.

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¹ Scherer,
i. 23, 24.
General
Harris's
Desp. 5th
April 1799.
Wel. Desp.
i. 515.

body of horse bore down on the right, under Harris himself.* They were, however, gallantly repulsed by the brigade under Harris's orders; while the 33d under Colonel Wellesley in person, on the left, were ordered to reserve their fire till within pistol-shot, when they delivered it with decisive effect, and immediately charged with the bayonet. The red-plumed dragoons of Floyd, soon after coming up from the centre, charged them on the other flank, and completed the rout. Two thousand of the enemy fell in the battle or the pursuit, while the loss of the victors did not exceed three hundred men.¹

24.
Investment
of Seringa-
patam.
April 5.

No further obstacle now remained to prevent the British from taking up their ground before Seringapatam, which was done on the 5th April. The assembled host, which was soon joined by the corps under General Stuart, from Bombay, presented a formidable appearance when all united together, and exhibited a splendid proof of the magnitude and resources of the British empire in the East. Thirty-five thousand fighting men, a hundred pieces of battering cannon, and camp-followers in the usual Asiatic proportion of four to each soldier, formed a stupendous array of above a hundred and fifty thousand men, assembled on the high table-land of Mysore, three thousand feet above the level of the sea, and more than eight thousand miles from the parent European state. The greatness of this effort will not be duly appreciated unless it is recollected, that at the same moment twenty thousand admirable troops, under Sir James Craig, lay in the territories of Oude, to guard the northern provinces of India from Zemaun Shah;² that the army was collected

² Wel. Desp.
i. 517, and
ii. 98.

* Colonel Wellesley, on this occasion, was not intended by General Harris to make the attack, but to wait till the onset was made by the right and centre, and orders to that effect were sent him by the commander-in-chief. When they were delivered, however, he saw, from the confusion into which the enemy in his front had fallen, that the attack could be made with more prospect of success by his division, and he said so to the officer who bore the despatches. He agreed with him, but stated that he had only to deliver his orders—but that he would report the circumstance, and Colonel Wellesley's opinion, to General Harris; and that, if he did not hear from him to the contrary in ten minutes, he might conclude the suggestion was approved of. Nothing was

in the Mediterranean which so soon after expelled the French from Egypt; and the fleet was afloat which was to dissolve, by the cannon of Nelson, the northern coalition.

The efforts of Lord Cornwallis had been directed against the northern face of the fortress of Seringapatam; and Tippoo, anticipating an attack in the same quarter, had greatly strengthened the defences in that direction. These preparations, however, were rendered altogether unavailing by the able movement of General Harris, previous to taking up his ground before the town, in suddenly crossing the Caverry by a neglected ford, and appearing before its southern front—a quarter in which the country was not yet ravaged, the fortifications in a comparatively neglected state, and the communication with the Bombay army direct and easy. The camp was formed opposite to the south-western side of the fortress; the army from Bombay effected its junction on the 14th; and the approaches were conducted with great vigour. In the course of these operations, much annoyance was experienced from an advanced post of the Sultaun's, placed on a rocky eminence near the walls, from whence a destructive fire, chiefly with rockets, was kept up on the parties working in the trenches. In order to put a stop to this harassing opposition, an attack on the post during the night was resolved on, and intrusted to Colonel Wellesley and Colonel Shaw. This nocturnal encounter would be of little importance, were it not rendered remarkable by a circumstance as rare as it is memorable, and worthy of being recorded for the encouragement of young officers exposed to early disaster—a failure by Wellington.¹*

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25.
Commence-
ment of the
siege, and
able preli-
minary
movement
of General
Harris.

¹ Wel. Desp.
i. 534, 540.
Gurw. i. 23,
25.

heard during that time, and Colonel Wellesley made the attack, which proved successful. "I was a little annoyed," said the Duke, in London, in 1823, "at the time, that this circumstance was not noticed by Harris in his official despatches, but I now see he was quite right not to mention it."

* The historical reader will recollect the parallel discomfiture of Frederick the Great at his first essay in arms at the battle of Mollwitz, which was gained by his lieutenants after he had abandoned the field. But there was this difference, that Frederick fairly ran away, whereas Wellington was merely borne back in the rush of his defeated followers, and was one of the last of the party that re-entered the camp.—See RANKE, *Geschichte der Staat. Preussien*, i. 371, 372.

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1799.

26.

A nocturnal
attack under
Col. Welles-
ley is re-
pulsed.

Both divisions marched a little after it was dark. Colonel Shaw succeeded in getting possession of a ruined village, within forty yards of the aqueduct from whence the firing issued ; but Colonel Wellesley, on reaching the rocky eminence, near the Sultanpettah Tope, was assailed on all sides with so severe a fire that both the 33d regiment and sepoy battalion, which he commanded, were thrown into disorder,* and he was obliged to fall back to the camp. Such was the confusion which prevailed, owing to the darkness of the night, that he arrived there accompanied only by Colonel Mackenzie. The young officer proceeded at midnight to the general's tent, at first much agitated ; but, finding the general not ready to receive him, he retired, threw himself on the table of the tent, and *fell asleep*—a fact in such a moment singularly characteristic of the imperturbable spirit of the future hero of Torres Vedras.† General Harris next morning drew out the troops for a second attack, and at first offered the command to General Baird, as Colonel Wellesley had not yet come up to the parade from having been detained at the adjutant-general's office ; but, on second thoughts, he said it was but fair to give Colonel Wellesley another trial—a proposal in which that generous officer, Baird, after having turned his horse to take the command, at once and cordially acquiesced. Accordingly, at ten next morning, Colonel Wellesley, with the Scottish brigade and two battalions of sepoys, again advanced against the Tope, which was soon carried in gallant style ; while Colonel Shaw, at the same time, drove the Mysoreans from their post on the side of the ruined village.¹ But

April 6.

¹ Wel. Desp.

April 20,

1799, i. 534,

540. Gur-

wood, i. 23,

25. Lushing-

ton's Life of

Harris, 297,

300.

* The 33d regiment and a *native* battalion, under Colonel Wellesley, were ordered to be in readiness at sunset on the 5th.—GURWOOD, i. 22. This is erroneously denied in Lushington, 476.

† "When they arrived back, Colonel Wellesley proceeded to headquarters to report what had happened ; but, finding that General Harris was not yet awake, he threw himself on the top of the dinner-table, and, worn out with fatigue and anxiety of mind, fell asleep."—M'KENZIE'S *Narrative*, who was with Wellesley on the occasion.—HOOK, i. 193. This fact is erroneously denied in Lushington's *Life of Harris*.

for this circumstance, and the elevation of mind which prompted both General Harris and General Baird to overlook this casual failure, and intrust the next attack to the defeated officer, the fate of the world might have been different, and the star of the future conqueror of Napoleon extinguished in an obscure nocturnal encounter in an Indian water-course.*

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1799.

The approaches to the fortress being much facilitated by this success, the operations of the siege were conducted with great rapidity. Several formidable sallies of the Mysore infantry and horse were repulsed by the steadiness of the besiegers' infantry, and the great vigilance exhibited everywhere in the trenches, the most exposed parts of which were under Colonel Wellesley's direction. At length, on the 30th April, the breaching batteries opened on one of the bastions, which was soon shaken by a severe cross-fire from different sides; the curtain on the right was ere long levelled; a great magazine of rockets blew up in the town on the morning of the 2d May, and spread terror and devastation far and wide by its tremendous explosion. Early on the morning of the 4th, the troops destined for the assault were placed in the trenches; and the hour of one o'clock in the afternoon was chosen for the attack, when the sultry heat usually disposed the Asiatics to repose. Two thousand five hundred Europeans, and two thousand natives, formed the storming party, under the command of General Baird. That heroic officer was resolved to conquer or die. "Either," said he to Colonel Agnew, "we succeed to-morrow, or you never see me more." The assailants had a fearful

27.
Assault of
Seringa-
patam.

April 30.

May 4.

* General, afterwards Sir David Baird, in particular, delicately and cordially agreed to the suggestion that Colonel Wellesley should be intrusted with the second attack: an instance of magnanimity in a superior officer—who might, if actuated by selfish feelings, have been anxious rather to throw into the shade a rival for the honours of the siege—worthy of the highest admiration. This fact is mentioned in Hook's *Memoirs of Sir David Baird*, and some doubt is thrown upon it in Gurwood's *Despatches of Wellington*; though that officer admits that Baird's elevated character was perfectly capable of so honourable a course. But, for the honour of human nature, the author is happy to be

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¹ Baird's
Life, i. 199,
202. Wel.
Desp. i. 697,
698.

prospect before them, for two-and-twenty thousand veteran troops composed the garrison, and the bastions, of uncommon strength, were armed with two hundred and forty pieces of cannon.¹ "Follow me, my brave fellows, and prove yourselves worthy of the name of British soldiers," was the brief address of that noble officer to his gallant followers, as, leaping sword in hand out of the trenches, he descended with the calmness of heroic courage the slope which led to the rocky bed of the Cavery, and which required to be crossed before the foot of the breach was reached. He was rapidly followed by the forlorn hope, which led the host, and was immediately succeeded by the assaulting column in close array. But before they reached the breach, the enemy were at their post, and equally resolute with the assailants. When Tippoo saw the British cross the Cavery, he said, without changing colour, to those around him, "We have arrived at the last stage: what is your determination?" "To die along with you," was the unanimous reply. All was ready for the defence, every battery was manned, and from every bastion and gun which bore on the assailants a close and deadly fire was directed, which speedily thinned their ranks, and would have caused any other troops to recoil.* On, however, the British rushed, followed by their brave allies, through the deadly storm.² In five minutes the river was crossed, in five more the breach was mounted;

² Baird's
Off. Desp.
Wel. i. 697,
699. Har-
ris's Desp.
May 7, 1799.
Ibid. i. 699.
Hook's
Baird, i.
206, 207.
Pearce's
Wellesley,
i. 297, 298.

able to give it an entire confirmation, having repeatedly heard the anecdote from a most gallant officer who was present on the occasion, and afterwards contributed, in no small degree, to the glories of Delhi and Laswaree—Colonel Gerard, afterwards adjutant-general of the Bengal army, then engaged in the siege, the author's lamented brother-in-law, to whose talents and virtues, durably recorded in the exploits of that band of heroes, he has a melancholy pleasure in bearing this public testimony. The fact also, as now related, coincides precisely with the account which Baird himself gave of the transaction, and which is given as authentic in the Life of Lord Harris by Mr Lushington.—See LUSHINGTON'S *Life of Harris*, 297-300; also Hook's *Memoirs of Sir David Baird*, i. 193; and GURWOOD, i. 25, note.

* "At one o'clock the troops moved from the breaches, and crossed the rocky bed of the Cavery under an extremely heavy fire, passed the glacis and ditch, and ascended the breaches in the faussebraye and rampart in the most gallant manner."—HARRIS to LORD MORNINGTON, 7th May 1799.

a crimson torrent streamed over the ruin ; a sally on the flank of the assaulting column by a chosen body of Tippoo's guards was repulsed ; and as Baird was leading his men up the entangled steep, a loud shout and the waving of the British colours on its summits announced that the fortress was won, and the capital of Mysore fallen.

But here an unexpected obstacle occurred—the summit of the breach was separated from the interior of the works by a wide ditch, filled with water, and at first no means of crossing it appeared. At length, however, Baird discovered some planks which had been used by the workmen in getting over it to repair the rampart, and, himself leading the way, this formidable obstacle was surmounted. Straightway dividing his men into two columns, under Colonels Sherbrooke and Dunlop, this heroic leader soon swept the ramparts both to the right and left. The brave Asiatics were by degrees forced back—Tippoo being the last man who quitted the traverses—though not without desperate resistance, to the Mosque, where a dreadful slaughter took place. The remains of the garrison were there crowded together in a very narrow space, having been driven from the ramparts by Sherbrooke's and Dunlop's columns, and jammed together in the neighbourhood of the Mosque, where they long maintained their ground under a dreadful cross-fire of musketry, till almost the whole had fallen. The remnant at length surrendered, with two of Tippoo's sons, when the firing had ceased at other points. The Sultaun himself, who had endeavoured to escape at one of the gates of the town which was assaulted by the sepoys, was some time afterwards found dead under a heap of several hundred slain, composed in part of the principal officers of his palace, who had been driven into the confined space round the Mosque. He was shot by a private soldier when stretched on his palanquin, after having been wounded and having had his horse killed under him ;¹ while Baird, who for three years had been detained a captive in chains in his dun-

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1799.

28.
Desperate
defence of
the Mosque.

¹ Baird's
Desp. i.
Wel. Desp.
697, 699.
Harris's
Desp. May
7, 1799.
Ibid. 569.
Hook's Life
of Baird, i.
206, 209.
Scherer, i.
29, 33.

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1799.

29.
Death of
Tippoo, and
his charac-
ter.

geons, had the glorious triumph of taking vengeance for his wrongs, by generously protecting and soothing the fears of the youthful sons of his redoubted antagonist.

Tippoo could never be brought to believe that the English would venture to storm Seringapatam, and he looked forward with confidence to the setting in of the heavy rains, which were soon approaching, to compel them to raise the siege. He was brave, liberal, and popular, during his father's life ; but his reign, after he himself ascended the throne, was felt as tyrannical and oppressive by his subjects. This, however, as is often the case in the East, they ascribed rather to the cupidity of his ministers than his own disposition. The Brahmins had predicted that the 4th of May would prove an inauspicious day to him ; he made them large presents on that very morning, and asked them for their prayers. He was sitting at dinner under a covered shed, to avoid the rays of the sun, when the alarm was given that the British were moving ; he instantly washed his hands, called for his arms, and, mounting his horse, rode towards the breach, which he reached as they were crossing the Cavery. On the way he received intelligence that Syed Goffer, his best officer, was killed. "Syed Goffer was never afraid of death," he exclaimed ; "let Mahommed Cassim take charge of his division ;" while he himself calmly continued to advance towards the tumult, and was actively engaged sustaining the rearguard, as it retired from the breach. His corpse was found under a mountain of slain, stripped of all its ornaments and part of its clothing, but with the trusty amulet which he always wore still bound round his right arm. He had received three wounds in the body, and one in the temple ; but the countenance was not distorted, the eyes were open, and the expression was that of stern composure. The body was still warm ; and for a minute Colonel Wellesley, who was present, thought he was still alive : but the pulse which had so long throbbed for the independence of India had ceased to beat.¹

¹ Scher.
i. 31, 37.
Lushington's Life
of Harris.
Allan's Narrative, 337,
347.

The storming of Seringapatam was one of the greatest blows ever struck by any nation, and demonstrated at once of what vast efforts the British empire was capable, when directed by capacity and led by resolution. The immediate fruits of victory were immense. A formidable fortress, the centre of Tippoo's power, garrisoned by twenty-two thousand regular troops, with all his treasures and military resources, had fallen ; the whole arsenal and founderies of the kingdom of Mysore were taken, and the artillery they contained amounted to the enormous number of 451 brass, and 478 iron guns, besides 287 mounted on the works. Above 520,000 pounds of powder, and 424,000 round-shot, also fell into the hands of the victors. The military resources, on the whole, resembled rather those of an old-established European monarchy, than of an Indian potentate recently elevated to greatness. But these trophies, great as they were, constituted the least considerable fruits of this memorable conquest : its moral consequences were far more lasting and important. In one day a race of usurpers had been extinguished, and a powerful empire overthrown ; a rival to the British power struck down, and a tyrant of the native princes slain ; a military monarchy subverted, and a stroke paralysing all India delivered. The loss in the assault was very trifling, amounting only to three hundred and eighty-seven killed and wounded, though fourteen hundred had fallen since the commencement of the siege. But the proportion in which it was divided indicated upon whom the weight of the contest had fallen, and how superior in the deadly breach European energy was to Asiatic valour ; for of that number three hundred and forty were British, and only forty-seven native soldiers. It is not the least honourable part of this glorious exploit, that, even in the dreadful moments which followed the storm, the palace was respected,¹ * and the whole ladies of

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30.
Immense
importance
of the blow
thus struck.¹ Wel. Desp.
i. 709. App.
and 572.
Scher. i. 39.

* "We feel great satisfaction," said the Mysore commissioners, "in being able to assure your lordship, that, before the Zenana was searched for treasure,

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XLIX.

1799.

31.

Appoint-
ment of Col.
Wellesley as
governor of
Seringa-
patam.

the harem were conducted to separate apartments before it was searched for treasure.

Colonel Wellesley was not engaged in the storm ; but he commanded the reserve, which did not require to be called into action, and merely viewed with impatient regret the heart-stirring scene. He was next day, however, named governor of the town by General Harris, which appointment was not disturbed by Lord Wellesley, and constitutes one of the few blots on the otherwise unexceptionable administration of that eminent man. Lord Wellesley was fully aware of the signal conduct and valour displayed by Baird in the siege and storm of Seringapatam ; but he selected his brother in preference to him, for the command of that important fortress, from his knowledge of the rare combination of civil and military qualities which he possessed. Had the appointment not been made by General Harris, he declared he would have made it himself. History, indeed, apart from biographical discussion, has little cause to lament an appointment which early called into active service the great civil as well as military qualities of the Duke of Wellington, which were immediately exerted with such vigour and effect in arresting the plunder and disorders consequent on the storm, that in a few days the shops were all reopened, and the bazars were as crowded as they had been during the most flourishing days of the Mysore dynasty. But individual injustice is not to be always excused by the merits of the preferred functionary ; and, unquestionably, the hero of Seringapatam, the gallant officer who led the assault, was entitled to a very different fate from that of being superseded in the command almost before the sweat was wiped from the brow which he had adorned with the laurels of victory,¹* and seeing another placed as governor of the

¹ Hook's
Life of
Baird, i.
226. Scher.
i. 34. Lush-
ington's Life
of Harris,
488. Pearce's
Wellesley,
i. 312, 313.

separate apartments were provided for the ladies, and no precaution omitted which could secure them against the possibility of being subjected to any inconvenience."—*Report of the Mysore Commissioners to Lord Wellesley*, June 8, 1799.—PEARCE'S *Wellesley*, i. 300.

* "It is impossible to bestow too much praise on the conduct of General

most important fortress that had ever been added to the British dominions.

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XLIX.

1799.

32.

Judicious
arrange-
ments con-
sequent on
the fall of
Mysore.

The political arrangements consequent on the fall of Mysore, rivalled in ability and wisdom the vigour with which the military operations had been directed. The body of Tippoo was interred with the honours due to his rank, in his father's mausoleum: his sons obtained a splendid establishment from the prudent generosity of the victors. The principal Mahommedan officers of the Mysore family, the main strength of the monarchy, were conciliated by being permitted to retain their rank, offices, and emoluments, under the new government. The heir of the ancient rajahs of Mysore, whom Hyder had dispossessed, was restored to the sovereignty of the country, with a larger territory than any one of his ancestors had possessed; and the Nizam was rewarded for his fidelity by a large accession of territory, taken from the conquests made by the Hyder family. The Peishwa was confirmed in his alliance by a grant somewhat more than a half of what had been allotted to the Nizam, although his conduct during the war had been so equivocal as to have forfeited all claim to the generosity of the British government, and rendered his participation in the spoil a matter merely of policy. To the Company were reserved the rich territories of Tippoo on either coast, below the Ghauts, the forts commanding those important passes into the high table-land of Mysore, with the fortress and island of Seringapatam in its centre—acquisitions which entirely encircled the dominions of the new Rajah of Mysore by the British possessions, and rendered his forces a subsidiary addition to those of the Company. With such judgment were these arrangements effected by the directions of Lord Wellesley, and under the immediate super-

Baird in the assault of Seringapatam. A more judicious operation, conducted with more spirit and heroic gallantry, never was achieved. The decisive consequences of the success of that day, effected within two hours the entire destruction of our most formidable enemy in India. I am sure you will concur with me in an anxious solicitude to see the gallant leader of the assailants

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1800.

intendence of Colonel Wellesley, and so considerable were the territories which were at the disposal of the victorious power, that all parties were fully satisfied with their acquisitions. The families of Hyder Ali and Tippoo Sultaun enjoyed more magnificent establishments than they had even done during the late reign; the infant Rajah of Mysore was elevated from a hovel to a palace, and reinstated in more than his ancestral splendour; the Mahommedan officers of the fallen dynasty, surprised by the continuance of all the honours and offices which they had formerly enjoyed, were impressed with the strongest sense of the generosity of the British government; while the substantial power of Mysore had passed, with a territory yielding £560,000 a-year, to the munificent victors.* At the special request of Colonel Wellesley, and by the directions of the prize committee, the state-sword of Tippoo Sultaun was presented to General Baird, in the name of the army. And Marquis Wellesley, the distributor of all this magnificence, put the purest gem in the diadem of glory with which his brows were encircled, by refusing for himself and his family any portion of the extensive prize-money derived from the public stores taken at Seringapatam, which had fallen into the hands of the victorious army.^{1†} The army had expressed their

¹ Lord Well.
Desp. to
Directors,
Aug. 3,
1799; ii. 72,
101. Pearce,
i. 335, 337.

rewarded in a manner suitable to his exertions and their beneficial effect."—LORD WELLESLEY to Mr DUNDAS, June 1799; *Wellesley Desp.* i. 619. Lord Wellesley's reasons for Colonel Wellesley's appointment are summed up in a few lines to him—"Great jealousy will arise among the officers in consequence of my employing you; but I employ you because I rely on your good sense, discretion, and spirit; and I cannot find all these qualities united in any other officer in India who could take such a command."—LORD WELLESLEY to COLONEL WELLESLEY, 1st Dec. 1800, *respecting the Isle of France expedition.*—PEARCE, i. 312, 315.

* The territory acquired by Tippoo's overthrow at this juncture by the Company was 20,000 square miles, while the Rajah of Mysore was reinstated in 29,250. The cession made by Tippoo on occasion of Lord Cornwallis's treaty, was 24,000 square miles. Great Britain contains 91,000 square miles; so that the territories wrested from Mysore by the two treaties were little short of the whole of Great Britain.—MARTIN'S *Map of India*, *Colonial Library*; and *Well. Desp.* i. p. 1.

† His letter on this subject is as follows:—"I understand that if the reserved part of the prize taken at Seringapatam, consisting of prize-money and ordnance,

desire to present the governor-general with a magnificent star, composed of Tippoo's jewels, and the court of directors proposed to make him a grant of one hundred thousand pounds out of the prize-money; but he refused both, lest he should interfere with the rewards due to the conquerors of Mysore.*

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Little difficulty was experienced in effecting the pacific settlement of the Mysore after the death of Tippoo—the principal rajahs having hastened to make their submission after they heard of the favourable terms offered by the conqueror to the nobles; and the judgment and firmness of Colonel Wellesley, upon whom, as governor of Mysore, the principal part of that important duty devolved, were alike conspicuous. One, however, Doondiah Waugh, a partisan of great energy and activity, was imprudently liberated during the confusion consequent on the storm of Seringapatam; and having collected a band of freebooters and disbanded soldiers from the wreck of Tippoo's army, he long maintained, with indefatigable perseverance, a desultory warfare. He first retired into the rich province of Bednore, which he plundered with merciless severity, during the paralysis of government consequent on the fall of the Mysore dynasty; but Colonel Stevenson and Colonel Dalrymple having advanced against him at the

33.
Rise and
power of
Doondiah
Waugh.

June.

should come into the possession of the Company, it is their intention to grant the whole to the army, reserving £100,000, to be afterwards granted to me. I am satisfied that, upon reflection, you will perceive that the accepting such a grant would place me in a very humiliating situation with respect to the army. And, independent of any question of my character, or of the dignity and vigour of my government, I should be miserable if I could ever feel that I had been enriched at the expense of those who must ever be the objects of my affection, admiration, and gratitude, and who are justly entitled to the exclusive possession of all that a munificent king and an admiring country can bestow. Even if the independence of my family were at stake, which I thank God it is not, I never could consent to establish it on an arrangement injurious to the conquerors of Mysore." Mr Pitt upon this proposed to Lord Wellesley, that this magnificent grant should be settled on him by government, and not taken from the prize-money; but this, too, his lordship declined. Such were the men, such the principles by which the British empire was raised to greatness at this period.—LORD WELLESLEY to HENRY DUNDAS, 29th April 1800—*Desp.* ii. 262, 263.

* The prize-money for the spoil taken at Seringapatam was immense; it

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1800.

Aug. 20.

¹ Auber, ii.
196, 197.
Scherer, i.
42, 43.

head of light bodies of cavalry and infantry, he was worsted in several encounters, the forts which he had occupied carried by assault, and himself driven, with a few followers, into the neutral Mahratta territory. Doondiah, however, though defeated, was not subdued. Meeting with no very friendly reception from the Mahratta chiefs, he again, in the succeeding year, hoisted the standard of independence, and soon attracted to his colours multitudes of those roving adventurers who, in India, are ever ready to join any chieftain of renown who promises them impunity and plunder.¹

34.
His pursuit
and over-
throw by
Colonel
Wellesley.

May, 1800.

Colonel Wellesley was so fully aware of the necessity of not permitting such a leader to accumulate a considerable force in provinces but recently subjected to European rule, and abounding with disorderly characters of every description, that, though he had recently refused the command of the projected expedition against Batavia, from a sense of the importance of his duties in Mysore, he took the field against him in person, and soon brought the contest to a successful termination. Doondiah having entered the Peishwa's territories in May 1800, Wellesley immediately moved against him with a body of light infantry, two regiments of British, and two of native dragoons. A victory recently gained over a considerable body of Mahratta horse, had greatly elated the spirits of Doondiah and his followers; he was rapidly following in the footsteps of Hyder Ali in the formation of a dynasty; and, in the anticipation of boundless dominion, he had already assumed the title of "King of the World." But the hand of fate was upon him. Advancing with a celebrity which exceeded the far-famed swiftness of the Indian chief, marching frequently twenty-five or thirty miles

amounted, independent of military stores, to the enormous amount of 4,558,350 star pagodas. Great complaints were made that General Harris, and the other principal officers employed, got an undue share of the amount in the distribution which the king ultimately erroneously sanctioned—which would appear to be the opinion of Mr Manners Sutton and Mr Perceval, as well as Lord Castlereagh.—See PEARCE'S *Life of Wellesley*, i. 346, 347, and 339.

a-day, even under the burning sun and over the waterless plains of India, Colonel Wellesley at length came up with the enemy, who retired at his approach. Hangal, into which he had thrown a garrison, was stormed; Dummul, defended by a thousand choice troops, carried by escalade; a division of his army, four thousand strong, attacked and routed, early on the morning of the 30th July, on the banks of the Malpoorba—the whole artillery, baggage, and camels being taken; and at length intelligence was received that Doondiah himself, with five thousand horse, lay at Conaghur, about thirty miles distant from Colonel Wellesley's cavalry. The latter made a forced march to reach him before it was dark, but the jaded state of the horses rendered it impossible to get nearer than nine miles on that night. Two hours before daylight, however, on the following morning, he was again in motion, and at five o'clock met the "King of the World," as he was marching to the westward, without any expectation of the British being at hand. Colonel Wellesley had only the 19th and 22d dragoons, and two regiments of native horse—in all about twelve hundred men; but with these he instantly advanced to the attack. Forming his troops into one line, so as not to be outflanked by the superior numbers of the enemy, who were quadruple his own force, and leading the charge himself, the British general resolutely bore down upon the foe. Doondiah's men were hardy veterans, skilfully drawn up in a strong position; but they quailed before the terrible charge of the British horse, and broke ere the hostile squadrons were upon them. The whole force was dispersed in the pursuit, and Doondiah himself slain—a decisive event, which at once terminated the war, and afforded no small exultation to the English soldiers, who brought back his body in triumph, lashed to a galloper gun, to the camp.¹

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1800.

July 14.

July 26.

¹ Sir A. Wellesley to Col. Munro, Sept. 11, 1800, and Lord Wellesley, Aug. 31, 1800. Gur. i. 69, 72, 73.

The effect of these brilliant successes soon appeared in the alliances with the Company which were sought by the Asiatic powers. The Nizam, who had obtained so

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1800.

35.

Alliances
with the
Nizam and
the Rajah of
Tanjore.

Oct. 12.

Oct. 25.

large an accession of territory by the partition treaty of Mysore, ere long found himself unequal to the task of governing his newly acquired territories, which were filled with warlike hordes, whom the strong arm of military power alone could retain in subjection. He solicited, in consequence, to be relieved of a burden which his character and resources were alike incapable of bearing. A treaty, offensive and defensive, was accordingly concluded with that potentate, soon after he had entered into occupation of his new possessions, by which the Company guaranteed the integrity of his dominions against all attacks from whatever quarter, and, to add to the security which he so ardently desired, agreed to augment the subsidiary force stationed at Hyderabad by two additional regiments of infantry and one of cavalry; while the Nizam ceded to the Company the whole districts which he had acquired by the treaties of Seringapatam in 1792, and Mysore in 1799, of which he had never been able to obtain more than a nominal possession. The territories thus acquired by the Company amounted to 25,950 square miles, or more than half of all England, and yielded a revenue of £450,000 yearly. The Rajah of Tanjore, anxious to shelter himself under a similar protection, entered into a treaty of the same description, and in return ceded lands, for the maintenance of his subsidiary force, amounting to 4000 square miles. The Portuguese settlement of Goa was voluntarily surrendered by its debilitated possessors to the English authorities, and the descendants of the ancient discoverers and conquerors of India acknowledged the rising supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race. Shortly after, (October 30,) a treaty of commerce and friendship was concluded with the Rajah of Nepaul, and the English influence extended to the foot of the Himalaya snows.¹

¹ Auber, ii. 205. Malcolm, ii. 283, 284. Wel. Desp. ii. 580, 582. Pearce's Wellesley, i. 371, 374.

Amicable relations were at the same time established with the Imaum of Muscat—a powerful chief, having a considerable naval force and vast maritime coast in the

Persian Gulf and on the shores of Arabia—and the King of Persia, which terminated in the conclusion of a most important treaty, both commercial and political, with the court of Ispahan. By its valuable privileges were secured to British trade in the interior of Asia, and a barrier was provided against the only powers which, at that period, were thought to threaten the provinces of Hindostan. It was agreed that, in the event of any inroad being threatened by the Affghans, or any hostile measures attempted by France, Persia should make common cause with England in arresting the invader. No stipulations were deemed necessary against Russia, though all history told that it was from that quarter that all the serious invasions of India had emanated; and although shortly before a treaty had been concluded between Napoleon and the Emperor Paul for the transport of a force of thirty-five thousand French, and fifty thousand Russian troops, from the banks of the Rhine and of the Wolga to those of the Indus. So short-sighted are the views even of the ablest statesmen and diplomatists, when, carried away by the pressing, and perhaps accidental, dangers of the moment, they overlook the durable causes which, in every age, elevate and direct the waves of conquest.¹

Delivered from all domestic dangers by these prosperous events, Lord Wellesley was enabled to direct the now colossal strength of the Indian empire to foreign objects. Such was the extent of resources at the disposal of government, that, without weakening, in any considerable degree, the force at any of the presidencies, he was enabled to fit out an expedition at Bombay, consisting of seven thousand men, to take part in the great concerted attack by the British government upon the French in Egypt. Sir D. Baird, as a just though tardy reward for his heroic conduct at Seringapatam, received the command, and sailed from Bombay on the 30th March. Colonel Wellesley had been appointed second in command, and he looked

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1801.

36.
And with
the Imaum
of Muscat,
and the
King of
Persia.
Jan. 1st,
1801.

¹ *Ante*, chap.
xxxiii. § 61.
Auber, ii.
205. Mal-
colm, 283-
4, 317. App.
534. Desp.
ii. 580, 581.

37.
Expedition
under Sir
D. Baird,
from India
to Egypt.
March 1801.

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1801.

forward with exultation to the service for which he was destined ; but a severe illness rendered it impossible for him to follow out his destination. General Baird, therefore, proceeded alone ; and Colonel Wellesley, to whom the important and romantic character of the expedition had rendered it an object of the highest interest, continued, during his recovery, to write letters to his brave commanding officer, containing suggestions for the conduct of the campaign, and precautions against its dangers, highly characteristic of the sagacious foresight of his mind. General Baird conducted the expedition with admirable skill, and contributed in no small degree, by his threatening advance, to the surrender of the French force at Cairo, and the triumphant issue of the Egyptian campaign, which has been already recounted ; while fate, which here seemed to have blasted Colonel Wellesley in the brightest epoch of his career, was only reserving him for higher destinies, and preparing, in the triumph of Assaye, the opening of that career which was destined to bring the war in Europe to a triumphant conclusion.¹

¹ *Ante*, chap. xxxiv. § 40. Baird's Life, ii. 283, 293. Col. Wellesley to Gen. Baird, April 11, 1801. Gurw. i. 84, 97. Pearce's Wellesley, ii. 75, 87.

38.
Great acquisition of territory from the Vizier of Oude.

Civil transactions, however, of the most important nature, highly conducive to the power and stability of the British empire in the East, ensued before the sword was again drawn on the plains of Hindostan. The kingdom of Oude had long been the seat of a large British force, both on account of the internal weakness of its government, and the importance of its situation on the northern frontier of India, and as the first state likely to fall a victim to foreign invasion. By existing treaties, the Company were at liberty to augment the subsidiary force serving in that province, if they deemed such increase requisite for the security of the two states ; and the mutinous, turbulent disposition both of the Vizier's soldiers and subjects, as well as his inextricable pecuniary embarrassments, had long made it too apparent that it was indispensably necessary for the very existence of society in these provinces, the security of our northern

frontier, and as a guarantee of the pay of the troops, that the weakness and corruption of the native government should be exchanged for the vigour and equity of British rule. The native prince, however, though well aware of his inability either to conduct his own administration, or discharge his engagements to the British government, evinced the utmost repugnance to make the proposed grants of territory in discharge of his obligations to maintain a subsidiary force; but at length his scruples were overcome by the firmness and ability of the British diplomatic agent, Mr Henry Wellesley, and a treaty was concluded at Lucknow, by which his highness ceded to the British government all the frontier provinces of Oude, particularly Goorackpoor and the lower Doab, containing thirty-two thousand square miles, or three-fourths of the area of England. The revenue of the ceded districts, at the time of the treaty, was estimated at considerably less than the subsidy which the Nawaub was bound to furnish for the pay of the subsidiary force, by which alone his authority had been maintained; but the British government was amply indemnified for this temporary loss by the rise of the revenue of the ceded districts, which, under the firm government of the Company, soon attained triple its former amount. At the same time, the native prince obtained the benefit of an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Company, and a permanent force of thirteen thousand men to defend his remaining territories; and the inhabitants of the transferred provinces received the incalculable advantage of exchanging a corrupt and oppressive native, for an honest and energetic European government.¹

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1801.

Sept. 6.

¹ Suldaun's
Treaty, Wel.
Desp. ii.
599. Mal-
colm, 322,
325. Auber,
ii. 227, 231.

Another transaction of a similar character, about the same period, put the British in possession of territories of equal value in the Carnatic. Among many other important papers discovered in the secret archives of Tippoo Suldaun, at Seringapatam, was a correspondence in cipher between that ambitious chief and the Nawaub of the

39.
Assumption
of the gov-
ernment of
the Carna-
tic.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1801.

July 31.

Carnatic, Omdut-ul-Omrah, which left no doubt that the latter had been engaged in a hostile combination against the British government.* The situation of the rich and fertile district of the Carnatic, so near to the British provinces on the Madras coast, rendered it of the highest importance that no hidden enemy should exist in that quarter; and as the authority of the Nawaub had been little more than nominal for a number of years past, Lord Clive, the governor of Madras, received orders to take military possession of the country in June 1801. The old Nawaub died about that time; and, after a difficult negotiation with his son, who had succeeded to his dominions, a treaty was at length concluded, by which the British obtained the entire command of his dominions, under the condition only of providing an income suitable to the splendour and dignity of the deposed family. This stipulation, like all others of a similar character, was faithfully complied with; and though, in making the cession, the young Nawaub unquestionably yielded to compulsion, yet he obtained for himself a peaceable affluence and splendid establishment; for his country, the termination of a distracted rule and a ruinous oppression; and for his subjects, blessings which they never could have obtained under a native dynasty. The territories thus acquired amounted to twenty-seven thousand square miles, and were of the richest description, embracing the plains from the foot of the Mysore mountains to the coast of Coromandel.¹

¹ Wel. Desp. ii. 515, 531, 547, 561. Auber, ii. 209, 211. Malcolm, 334, 360.

40.
Causes of
the rupture
with the
Mahrattas.

But there never was a juster observation than the one already noticed, that conquest, to induce security, must be universal; for anything short of that only induces additional causes of jealousy, and a wider sphere of hostility.

* This correspondence, the cipher to which was accidentally discovered, was very curious. It contained decisive evidence that the Nawaub had severely reprobated the Nizam's alliance with the English, as contrary to the dictates of religion; as well as the triple alliance between that potentate and the Mahrattas and the English, which had been the principal means in 1792 of reducing the power of Tippoo. The English were denominated *Taza Waruds*,

By destroying the power of Tippoo, and reducing the Nizam to a mere tributary condition, the English had done what Napoleon had achieved by crushing Prussia, humbling Austria, and establishing the Confederation of the Rhine ; they had rendered inevitable a contest with a more formidable power than either, and induced a struggle for life or death with the most powerful nations in India. The formation of alliances, offensive and defensive, with the Nizam and the Rajah of Mysore, necessarily brought the British government into contact with their restless and enterprising neighbours the MAHRATTAS, and made them succeed to all the complicated diplomatic relations between the courts of Hyderabad, Seringapatam, and Poonah. It is needless to examine minutely the causes of the jealousy and ultimate rupture which ensued between them. That the Mahrattas—a powerful confederacy, inflamed by conquest, inured to rapine, whose hand was against every man and every man's hand against them, and who could bring two hundred thousand horsemen into the field—should view with apprehension the rapid advances of the English to supreme dominion, is not surprising ; the only thing to wonder at is, that, like the European powers in regard to Napoleon, they should so long have looked supinely on, while the redoubtable stranger beat down successively every native power within his reach. They owed, as already mentioned, a nominal allegiance to the Peishwa, who was the head of their confederacy, and held his seat of government on the *musnud*, or throne, at Poonah ; and it was with him that all the treaties and diplomatic intercourse, both of the Company and the native powers, had been held. But his authority, like that of the Emperor in the Germanic confederacy, was more nominal than

or the new-comers; the Nizam himself *Fleech*, or nothing ; and the Mahrattas *Pooch*, or contemptible. By the 10th article of the treaty of 1792, he was bound “not to enter into any negotiation or political correspondence with any European or native power whatever, without the consent of the Company.”—MALCOLM'S *India*, 337, 339.

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1801.

¹ Lord Wel.
Desp. iii.
26, Introd.
Auber, ii.
272, 273.

real; and the principal chiefs in this warlike, restless race acted as much on their own account as the cabinets of Vienna, Berlin, and Munich. Three of these had recently risen to eminence, and formed the chief powers with whom the English had to contend in the arduous conflict which followed—the RAJAH OF BERAR, SCINDIAH, and HOLKAR.¹

41.
Character
and situa-
tion of the
Rajah of
Berar and
of Scindiah.

The Rajah of Berar had established his sway over all the territory from the sea, on the western shore of the Bay of Bengal, to the dominions of the Nizam on the south-west. His capital was at Nagpoor; and he could bring twenty thousand disciplined cavalry, and half that number of infantry, into the field. Scindiah's power was much more considerable. Besides sixty thousand admirable horse, he had sixteen battalions of regular infantry under the command of European officers, and above two hundred pieces of cannon ready for action. Holkar's territories were farther removed from the scene of action, being situated between the dominions of the Rajah of Scindiah and Bombay; but his power was greater than either of the other chieftains. He could with ease bring eighty thousand men into the field: and though the greater part of them were cavalry, they were only on that account the more formidable to an invading enemy. The families of the two latter of these chiefs had been only recently elevated. The founder of that of Scindiah, the grandfather of the present Rajah, had originally been a cultivator, and owed his rise, when a private soldier in the guard of the Peishwa, to the accidental circumstance of being discovered by his sovereign, when left at the door in charge of his slippers, asleep with the slippers clasped with fixed hands to his breast—a proof of fidelity to his humble duty which justly attracted the attention of the monarch. Both the present Rajah and his father had been the resolute opposers of the English power; and though they wielded at will the resources of the Peishwa, they were careful to observe all the ceremonials of respect

to that decayed potentate. When Scindiah was at the head of sixteen regular battalions, sixty thousand horse, and two hundred pieces of cannon, he placed himself at the court of the Peishwa below all the hereditary nobles of the state, declined to sit down in their presence, and untying a bundle of slippers, said, "This is my occupation: it was my father's." But, though thus humble in matters of form, no man was more vigorous and energetic in the real business of government. He was the nominal subject but real master of the unfortunate Mogul Emperor, Shah Aulum; the ostensible friend but secret enemy of his rival Holkar; the professed inferior but actual superior and oppressor of the Rajpoot chiefs of central India; the enrolled soldier but tyrannic ruler of the declining throne of the Peishwa.¹

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1801.

¹ Auber, ii.
272, 277.
Lord Wel-
lesley to
Secret Com-
mittee, Sept.
1803, iii.
372.

The family of Holkar had been originally of the shepherd tribe; the first who rose above the class of peasants was Mulhar Row, born in 1693. By the vigour and ability which they subsequently displayed, his ancestors gradually rose to eminence under the Mahratta chiefs, and at the death of Tukajie, the head of the family, in 1797, two legitimate and two natural sons of the house appeared to contest the palm of supremacy. Jeswunt Row was the youngest of the latter class: and in the first civil contest which ensued with his legitimate brothers, he was totally defeated, and obliged to fly with only a few followers. The native vigour of his character, however, rose superior to all his difficulties. He underwent the most extraordinary vicissitudes of fortune, in the course of which, on one occasion, he quelled a revolt among his Pindaree followers by springing from his horse, and with his own hand loading and discharging a field-piece among them. By the force, however, of courage and perseverance he at length succeeded in all his designs, and under the title of guardian to the infant son of his elder legitimate brother, in effect obtained the command of the whole possessions of the Holkar family. For some time he was engaged in

42.
And of
Holkar.

1798.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1802.

Oct. 25,
1802.

¹ Auber, ii.
275, 287.
Malcolm,
287, 290.
Wel. Desp.
iii. 27, 34,
Introd.

43.
Reasons for
a Mahratta
war. Per-
ron's French
force.

hostilities with Scindiah ; but no sooner was his power fully established than these two formidable chieftains united their forces against the Peishwa, the acknowledged head of the confederacy. The combined armies encountered those of their nominal superior in the neighbourhood of Poonah. Scindiah's forces commenced the action, and his troops at first met with a repulse ; while Holkar, with his cavalry dismounted, watched the conflict from the heights in the rear. Instantly mounting his horse, the brave chief bade all who did not intend to conquer or die to return to their wives and children ; for himself, he was resolved not to survive defeat. Bearing down with his squadrons, yet fresh, on the wearied foe, Holkar soon restored the combat, and finally routed the Peishwa's troops with great slaughter. The unhappy monarch was obliged to fly from his capital, which was soon occupied by his enemies, and the august head of the Mahrattas appeared as a suppliant in the British territories.¹

Lord Wellesley justly deemed this a favourable opportunity to establish a proper balance of power among the Mahratta states, and erect a barrier between their most enterprising chiefs and the British dependencies. It had long been a leading object of English policy to prevent the establishment of any considerable power in India with whom the French might form dangerous connexions ; and already a sort of military state had risen up, of the most formidable character, under French officers, and under Scindiah's protection, on the banks of the Jumna. Perron, a French officer in the service of that chieftain, had organised a formidable force, consisting of thirty thousand infantry and eight thousand cavalry, admirably equipped and disciplined, with a train of a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon of brass, and one hundred and twenty iron guns, entirely under the direction of officers of his own country, and disposed equally to second the hostile views of the Mahratta confederacy, or forward those of Napoleon for the subversion of the British power in the East.

For the maintenance of this subsidiary force he had obtained a grant of a rich and extensive territory, yielding £1,700,000 a-year of revenue, extending from the banks of the Jumna towards those of the Indus, through the Punjaub, and comprising Agra, Delhi, and a large portion of the Doab, or alluvial plain between the Jumna and the Ganges. It was not the least important circumstance in this military establishment, that it gave M. Perron the entire command of the person of the unfortunate Shah Aulum, the degraded heir of the Mogul empire of Delhi; and promised at no distant period to put the French Emperor in possession of the rights of the house of Timour over the whole Indian peninsula.¹

CHAP.
XLIX.

1802.

¹ Malcolm,
308. Wel.
Desp. iii. 29,
31. Introd.
Auber, ii.
286, 287.
Gurw. i.
87.

The Peishwa was not insensible of the need in which he stood of British protection, to maintain his precarious authority over the unruly Mahratta chiefs; but dread of the hostility of Scindiah and Holkar, joined to a secret jealousy of the rising power of the aspiring foreigners, had hitherto prevented him from closing with the advances made to him by the governor-general. Nay, he had even declined to accept the share of the spoils of Mysore, which, in order to conciliate his cabinet, had, notwithstanding their dubious conduct in the war with Tippoo, been offered by the British government. The decisive overthrow received from Scindiah and Holkar, however, and the desperate state of his affairs in consequence of their invasion, entirely overcame these scruples; and, on the morning of the day on which he evacuated his capital, the fugitive monarch eagerly solicited the aid of a British subsidiary force to enable him to make head against his rebellious feudatories. He was cordially received, therefore, by the British authorities; and having escaped out of his dominions, he embarked on board a British vessel, and landed safely at Bombay.² The result of these disastrous circumstances was the conclusion of the treaty of Bassein between the Company and the Peishwa, in virtue of which a close alliance offensive and defensive was con-

^{44.}
The Peishwa
at length
joins the
British
alliance.

Oct. 25.

Dec. 3.

Dec. 18.
² Wel. Desp.
iii. 33, 36.
Malcolm,
290, 291.
Auber, ii.
287, 289.

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tracted by the two powers, and the latter agreed to receive a subsidiary force, to be maintained at his expense, of six thousand men.

45.
Collection
of forces,
and delivery
of Poonah
by Colonel
Wellesley.

This crisis was rightly considered by Lord Wellesley to require the immediate application of the most vigorous measures. In contemplation of its arrival, he had already collected a body of twenty thousand men under General Stuart, at Hurryhurr, a town of the Madras presidency, near the Mahratta frontier; while General, afterwards LORD LAKE, received the command of the principal force, called the army of Bengal, which was stationed in Oude. The Madras army, however, was afterwards divided into two parts, and the command of the advanced guard, consisting of ten thousand European and sepoy troops, with two thousand of the Mysore horse, was intrusted to Colonel Wellesley, whose admirable dispositions, during the war with Doondiah, had both won for him the confidence of the troops and conciliated the goodwill of the native powers. With this force, that enterprising officer broke up from Hurryhurr on the 9th March, and, after crossing the Toombudra river, entered the Mahratta territory. He was everywhere received by the people as a deliverer. The peasants, won by the strict discipline of his troops, and the regular payment for provisions in the former campaign, flocked in crowds with supplies, as they afterwards did in France, to the camp; while the whole inhabitants, worn out with the incessant oppression of the Mahratta sway, welcomed, with loud shouts, the troops who were to introduce in its room the steadiness of British rule and the efficiency of British protection. Holkar had left Poonah some time before, with the bulk of his army, and the garrison which he had left in that capital abandoned it on the approach of the British forces. Colonel Wellesley, therefore, deemed it unnecessary to wait the tardy movements of the infantry; and aware of the importance of gaining possession of the capital before Scindiah could assemble forces for its relief, or the

March 9,
1803.

threats of burning it, which they had uttered, could be executed, put himself at the head of the cavalry, and, advancing by forced marches, reached Poonah on the 19th April, and entered the city amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants, whom, by an extraordinary effort, he had saved from the vengeance of the retiring enemy. In the thirty-two hours immediately preceding, he had marched at the head of his horse above sixty miles—an instance of sustained effort, under the burning sun of India, which has never been exceeded in history.¹

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April 19.
¹ Wel. Desp.
iii. 37, 38.
Introd.
Gurw. iii.
138, 145.

The effects of this vigorous step were soon apparent. The Peishwa, relieved from his compulsory exile in Bombay, returned to his dominions, and was reseated with much pomp, in presence of the British army, on the *musnud*, or hereditary throne of the Mahrattas. His principal feudatories renewed their allegiance to him, and even, in some instances, joined their troops to the British forces; and it was for a short time hoped that this great stroke of securing that monarch to the British interest, by the strong bond of experienced necessity, would be accomplished without the effusion of blood. It ere long appeared, however, that these hopes were fallacious. The jealousies and animosities of the Mahratta chiefs had been subdued by the approach of common danger; and it speedily became manifest, from the great accumulation of forces which assembled on the frontiers of the Nizam's territories, that hostilities on a very extended scale were in contemplation. Lord Wellesley's preparations were immediate, and proportioned to the greatness of the danger. General Lake assumed the command of the principal army, twenty-five thousand strong, which had assembled in Oude; while Colonel Wellesley, now promoted to the rank of general, drew near to the threatening mass of forces which was collected on the Nizam's frontier. A long negotiation ensued, conducted by Colonel Collins, the British resident at the court of Scindiah—the professed aim of which was to smooth

46.
Negotia-
tions with
Scindiah
and the
Rajah of
Berar.

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¹ Wel. Desp.
iii. 38, 41.
Malcolm,
293, 300.

away the subjects of jealousy which had arisen between the two powers; its real object to gain time for Scindiah, till the preparations of the Rajah of Berar were completed, and his approach had enabled the combined forces to take the field.¹

47.

War is at
length de-
clared.

May 27.

At length, in the end of May, Scindiah being much pressed to give an explanation of his armaments, or direct the withdrawal of his troops, broke up the conference by declaring, "After my interview with the Rajah of Berar, you shall be informed whether we will have peace or war." It was evident to the persons who conducted this negotiation, that the success of the Mahratta confederacy with Hyder in 1780, which had brought the Madras presidency to the brink of ruin, had inspired the chiefs of that nation with a most extravagant opinion of their own importance; that they were wholly unaware of the vast intermediate progress which the British power had made; and deemed that the renewal of hostilities on their part would be immediately followed by the siege of Madras and expulsion of the English from India. Perceiving this, and being convinced that a rupture was inevitable, Lord Wellesley committed full diplomatic powers to his generals in the field; and General Wellesley demanded, in peremptory terms, an explanation of Scindiah's intentions, and removal of his forces from the Nizam's frontier to a less threatening station. The rajah, in his turn, insisted upon the withdrawal of the British forces, to which General Wellesley at once agreed; but when the time for carrying the mutual retreat into effect arrived, the Mahrattas showed no disposition to move, and the British government received information that the combined chiefs had resolved not to retire from their threatening position.^{2*} Upon this, the resident quitted

Aug. 3.

² Wel. Desp.
iii. 38, 41,
Introd. and
344, 346.
Malcolm,
293, 307.
Auber, ii.
291, 299.

* The substance of this important negotiation was thus pithily summed up by the Duke of Wellington, in a letter to Scindiah at this period:—"The British government did not threaten to commit hostilities against you, but you threatened to commence hostilities against them and their allies; and when called upon to explain your intentions, you declared that it was doubtful

Scindiah's court, and war began both on the Oude frontier under Lord Lake, and that of the Nizam under General Wellesley.

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General, afterwards Lord Lake, was born in 1744, of an ancient and respectable family, which boasted of a descent from Launcelot of the Lake, one of the chevaliers of the Round Table. At the age of fourteen he entered the army, and served with distinction both in the American and Flemish wars. In 1798 he was actively engaged in the contest with the Irish rebels: he took part in the decisive battle of Vinegar Hill, and though worsted at Castlebar by the French troops, who subsequently landed, he had his revenge at Ballynamuck, where he made prisoners a large body of the invaders. In 1800 he received the appointment of Commander-in-chief of the British forces in India. It was there that his real career began: and his achievements in Eastern warfare far exceeded anything recorded of his ancestor of the Lake, or of Arthur's knights in European story. His first care on taking the command, was to improve the efficiency of the native cavalry; and such was the docility and emulation of those brave troops, that the desultory habits to which they had been accustomed, under their native chiefs, were speedily exchanged for the precision and regularity of European discipline. It was in this previous preparation that the foundation was laid for all his subsequent successes. It supplied the deficiency

48.
Early his-
tory of Lord
Lake.

whether there would be peace or war, and, in conformity with your threats and declared doubts, you assembled a large army in a station contiguous to the Nizam frontier. On this ground I called upon you to withdraw your army to its usual stations, if your pacific declarations were sincere; but, instead of complying with this reasonable requisition, you have proposed that I should withdraw the troops which are intended to defend the territories of the allies against your designs; and that you and the Rajah of Berar should be suffered to remain with your troops assembled, in readiness to take advantage of their absence. This proposition is unreasonable and inadmissible, and you must stand to the consequences of the measures which I find myself obliged to adopt to repel your aggressions. I offered you peace upon terms of equality, and honourable to all parties; you have chosen war, and are responsible for all the consequences."—GENERAL WELLESLEY to SCINDIAH, 6th Aug. 1803—*Well. Despatches*, iii. 277.

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which had hitherto been so painfully experienced by the British, in the campaigns of Hindostan, in combating the Eastern horse; and by engrafting the steadiness and obedience of Europe on the fire and celerity of Asia, reared up a body of cavalry superior to any that had yet followed the British standards in the East, and perhaps equal to any in the world, in vigour and warlike prowess. In a word, Lake accomplished in India what Napoleon projected in Egypt, when he said that, if he could unite the French infantry to the Mameluke horse, he would conquer the world.¹

¹ Biog.
Univ. xxiii.
211.

49.
His charac-
ter.

Lord Lake was one of the greatest cavalry officers that Europe has ever produced. He had the vigour of mind and fearless temperament which is essential to great achievement, and no one more thoroughly understood the great art of strategy—that of relinquishing lesser objects, and striking with an overwhelming force at the decisive points. But his boldness sometimes savoured of rashness; his marvellous successes caused him to underrate his enemy; his constant triumphs made him think his troops equal to anything. By neglecting the suggestions of prudence, and overlooking the necessity of combination, he sometimes ran unnecessary risks, and brought the British empire in the East into serious danger. His imprudent advance of Monson's division, and attack of Bhurtpore with inadequate means, are examples of this tendency. But if his ardent spirit, sanguine disposition, and unbounded confidence in his followers, sometimes led himself and his troops into peril, no general was more felicitous in extricating himself from it; and none more frequently, by a quick decision and fearless advance, converted threatening danger into ultimate triumph. In rapidity of movement, determination of conduct, hardihood in difficulty, and endurance of fatigue, he never was surpassed. Alexander, at the head of his phalanx, did not throw himself with more intrepidity into the midst of the enemy's columns: Murat did not head a charge of

cavalry with more chivalrous valour : Jugurtha, with his Numidian horse, did not excel him in the rapidity with which he followed up the pursuit of a beaten foe. At the head of a chosen band of light-armed British and native dragoons, he fairly ran down Holkar and the Mahratta horse on their own territory. He did not, like former generals, alike in ancient and modern times, make the discipline of European foot withstand the assaults of Asiatic horse ; he combated Asia with her own weapons, and defeated her with the sword and the lance, on her own waterless plains. Generous, affable, considerate in private, he was alike beloved by his officers and adored by his men ; and nothing but his sudden death in February 1808, before the Peninsular contest began, prevented him from leaving a name immortal in European, as he had already done in Asiatic annals.

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The campaign which followed, though it lasted only five months, was one of the most brilliant in the British annals, and conducted our Eastern empire, by an uninterrupted series of victories, to the proud pre-eminence which it has ever since maintained. The instructions to General Lake, dictated by that clear perception of the vital point of attack which, as much as his admirable foresight, characterised all Marquis Wellesley's combinations, were to concentrate all his efforts, in the first instance, for the destruction of M. Perron's formidable force on the banks of the Jumna ; next to get possession of Delhi and Agra, with the person of Shah Aulum, the Mogul emperor ; and finally, to form alliances with the Rajpoots and other native powers beyond the Jumna, so as to exclude Scindiah from the northern parts of India. General Wellesley was directed to move against the combined forces of Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar, on the Nizam's frontier, and distract their attention by vigorous operations, while decisive blows were struck by General Lake at the centre of their power.¹ Subsidiary operations at the same time were to be con-

50.
Lord Wellesley's plan of operations.

¹ Auber, ii. 301, 305.
Wellesley's Desp. iii. 210, 215.

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51.
Defeat of
Perron's
force, and
storming of
Allighur.

Aug. 29.

Sept. 4.

1 Lord
Lake's
Desp. Sept.
4, 1803.
Wel. Desp.
iii. 291, 294.
Auber, ii.
306.

ducted by Colonel Campbell against the province of Cuttack, and the city of Juggernaut, with the view of adding that important district, the link between the Bengal and Madras provinces, to the British dominions.

General Lake's army commenced its march from the ceded provinces of Cawnpore on the 7th August, and on the 28th, as he drew near to Perron's force, he received a letter from that officer, proposing to enter into an arrangement, by which he himself and the troops under his command might remain neutral in the contest which was approaching; but the terms proposed were deemed inadmissible, and the flag of truce returned without effecting any arrangement. On the day following, the English came up with the whole of Perron's force, drawn up in a strong position, covering the important fort of Allighur. They were immediately attacked by the British army with the greatest vigour, and after a short resistance put to flight. The fortress of Allighur was next besieged; and, as the extraordinary strength of its fortifications, armed with one hundred and eighty guns, rendered operations in form a very tedious undertaking, General Lake, after a few days' cannonading, resolved to hazard the perilous attempt of an escalade. The ditch, to use his own expression, was large enough to float a seventy-four, and the garrison, four thousand strong, both disciplined and resolute; but all these difficulties were overcome by the determined gallantry of the storming party, headed by the 76th regiment, led by Colonel Monson. After a bloody struggle, an hour in duration, the gates were blown open, and the British colours hoisted on the walls of the fortress.¹

52.
Battle of
Delhi,

Brilliant as was this opening of the campaign, it was speedily succeeded by other successes still more important. Advancing rapidly towards Delhi, General Lake was met by General Perron, who entered into a separate negotiation, and soon passed through the British camp on his way to embark for France, with the large

fortune which he had made in the Mahratta service. But he was succeeded in the command of the French subsidiary force by M. Louis, who, instead of showing any disposition to come to an accommodation, advanced in great force, and with a most formidable train of artillery. The British army, after a fatiguing march of eighteen miles, on the 11th of September found the enemy, twenty thousand strong, including sixteen thousand disciplined in the European method, with a hundred pieces of cannon, posted on a strong ridge which covered the approaches to the city of DELHI. The troops which General Lake had at his immediate disposal, as the whole of the army had not come up, did not exceed five thousand men; but with this handful of heroes he did not hesitate instantly to advance to the attack. When the men came within range, they were received by a tremendous fire, first of round and chain shot, and afterwards of grape and musketry. Advancing, however, without flinching, through the dreadful storm, the British waited till the order was given, at the distance of a hundred yards, to fire; and then, after pouring in a close and well-directed volley, rushed forward with the bayonet, and in a few minutes drove the enemy from their guns and from the field in the utmost confusion. Sixty-eight pieces of heavy artillery, thirty-seven tumbrils, and eleven standards were taken; but such was the severity of the fire to which they were exposed during their rapid advance, that in that short time four hundred of the British army were killed and wounded, and it was to the steady intrepidity of the 76th regiment that General Lake mainly ascribed the glorious result of the battle.^{1*}

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XLIX.1803.
Sept. 11.

¹ Lord
Lake's Desp.
Sept. 12
and 13,
1803. Wel.
Desp. iii.
308, 313.

* The following passage in Lord Lake's private despatch to Lord Wellesley on this occasion, contains a remark of permanent interest, more especially in anticipation of the future progress of events in the Indian peninsula:—"I cannot avoid saying, in the most confidential manner, that, *in the event of a foreign foe coming into this country, without a very great addition of force in Europeans* the consequences will be fatal; as there ought always to be at least

Lord Lake's
strong opinion
of the neces-
sity of Euro-
pean troops
in India.

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53.

Alliance
with the
Mogul em-
peror, and
surrender of
the French
chiefs.
Sept. 16.

The immediate consequence of this victory was the capture of Delhi, the ancient capital of Hindostan, and seat of the Mogul emperors, which was taken possession of without resistance on the following day, and the liberation of the Emperor Shah Aulum from the degrading servitude in which he had long been retained by the Mahratta and French authorities. The English general was received by the descendant of Timour, seated on his throne with great pomp, in presence of all the dignitaries of the empire. Experience in the end proved that he had made a most beneficial change for his own interest; for if the original Tartar conqueror would have had much to regret in the deprivation of real power with which the change in his circumstances was attended, his enfeebled successor found much to envy in the perfect security and unbounded luxury which he enjoyed under the liberal protection of his generous allies. The British power derived great moral influence and consideration from this auspicious alliance; and the name of the Emperor of Delhi proved of more service in the end than ever his arms could have been. But an event of more immediate importance to the success of the campaign soon after occurred. M. Louis, and five other chiefs of the French subsidiary force, despairing of their cause, delivered themselves up to the British, and were marched off to Calcutta; while the remainder of the troops under their orders, in a great degree destitute of leaders, retired, though in good order, towards Agra.¹

¹ Wel. Desp.
iii. 316, 318,
319.

one European battalion to four native ones: this I think necessary. I have seen a great deal of these people lately, and am quite convinced that, *without King's troops, very little is to be expected*: in short, the infantry of this army, as well as cavalry, should be remodelled."—*Confidential Despatch, Sept. 12, 1803* — *Well. Desp.* iii. 312. This wise advice has been since entirely thrown away; because the English government have not since ventured, in the face of popular clamour for reduction and retrenchment, to keep up the British troops in India at their former level, far less to augment them to double their amount, as they should have been, to preserve the proper balance between the European and native forces. It was immediately *after* the battle of Austerlitz that Napoleon, gifted with the sagacity which amounts to prescience, formed his designs for the fortifications of Paris; and it was immediately after the battle

Thither they were speedily followed by General Lake with the British army; and, on the 10th October, a general attack was made on their strong positions, intersected by ravines, covering the city from the south. The gallant sepoy troops, emulating the conduct of their European brethren in arms, under the guidance of Lieut.-Colonel Gerard, the adjutant-general of the army, drove the enemy in the finest style from the rugged ground which they occupied, and, pursuing their advantages hotly, ascended the glacis, and gained possession of the outworks, though not without sustaining a heavy loss. Two days afterwards, two thousand five hundred of the enemy came over and entered the British service; and the breaching batteries having been completed, and the fire opened with great effect on the ramparts, the garrison, six thousand strong, soon after surrendered at discretion. By this decisive blow, the last stronghold and great arsenal of the enemy fell into our hands. The stores captured were immense: one hundred and sixty pieces of brass and iron cannon were taken, with all their equipments and ammunition; while the discipline observed by the troops in the midst of their triumphs was so extraordinary, and afforded such a contrast to the license and devastation usually attendant on military success in Hindostan, that it contributed, even more than their astonishing victories, to the belief that they were, and the wish that they should continue to be, invincible.¹ *

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1803.

54.

Battle and
fall of Agra.
Oct. 10.

Oct. 13.

Oct. 17.

¹ Lord
Lake's
Desp. 10th,
13th, and
18th Oct.
1803. Wel.
Desp. iii.
393, 408,
and App.
670.

This early and unparalleled series of successes secured

of Delhi that Lord Lake impressed upon government the necessity of a great augmentation in the European forces in India. The future to the one has passed; and Napoleon, as we shall see in the sequel, fell, because dread of offending the Parisian populace prevented him from carrying into execution what he felt to be essential to the salvation of their independence. The future to us is still to come, though the prospect is enveloped in clouds, and sinister omens may already be discerned in the heavens; but posterity will be able to judge whether the British empire is to be an exception to the rule, and stability is to be given to our power by concessions to popular and ignorant clamour, which have proved fatal to the greatest of those who have preceded us.

* "All the inhabitants of this place, (Delhi,) who for a time fled, perceiving

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55.

Battle of
Laswaree.

Oct. 10.

Oct. 21.

Nov. 1.

Oct. 30.

Nov. 1.

Humane con-
duct of the
British
troops.

the submission or alliance of all the native potentates in the north of Hindostan; and a treaty of alliance was concluded with the Rajah of Bhurtpore, and another with Runjeet Sing, the Rajah of Lahore, the strength of whose military power was afterwards so seriously experienced in the Punjaub; in consequence of which fifteen hundred of the latter's horse joined the British camp. Meanwhile, however, Scindiah moved up fourteen battalions of his best regular infantry from the Deccan by forced marches into the northern provinces; and these troops, having joined some regiments which had escaped from the wreck of Delhi and Agra, and received an ample supply of artillery, formed a formidable force, which it was of the last importance to destroy before its numbers were still further augmented by additions from other quarters. Leaving behind him, therefore, his artillery, and the greater part of his infantry, General Lake set out with the cavalry and light infantry, by forced marches, in pursuit of the enemy. After several fatiguing days' journey, he reached the spot they had quitted the day before, and received intelligence that they were not more than forty miles from the British camp. Setting out at midnight, he accomplished that distance at the head of his cavalry, in the next twenty-four hours, and about noon, on the 1st November, came up with the enemy, sixteen thousand strong, with seventy pieces of cannon, advantageously posted with their right upon a rivulet, which required to be crossed before their position was reached, and their

that no ravages had been committed by the troops, returned to their habitations last night. I am informed from all quarters that the inhabitants beheld with astonishment this proof of the discipline and good conduct of the army, and declare that hitherto it has been unknown in Hindostan, that a victorious army should pass through a country, without destroying by fire, and committing every excess the most injurious to the inhabitants; but on the contrary, from the regularity observed by us, our approach is a blessing, instead of bringing with it, as they at first feared, all the horrors of war, attended by rapine and murder; that their cattle remain in the fields without being molested, and the inhabitants in their houses receive every protection."—LORD LAKE to LORD WELLESLEY, 2d Oct. 1803—*Well. Desp.* iii. 426, 427.

On this occasion, also, Lord Lake reiterates his observation of the indispensable necessity of having a large proportion of British troops to achieve success

left resting on the village of LASWAREE. The dust, which obscured all the ground in advance of the enemy as soon as the rivulet was crossed, prevented the English general from seeing the extent of the formidable array of guns which protected their front; and in his anxiety to cut off their retreat to the neighbouring hills, he resolved upon an immediate assault with the cavalry alone, before any part of the infantry had come up. The attack was made, and at first with brilliant success. Wearied as they were, the British and native cavalry forced the enemy's line at several points, penetrated into the village, and even carried a part of the artillery; but being unsupported by infantry and cannon, these gallant horsemen could make no reply to the severe fire of artillery and musketry with which they were assailed; the taken guns could not be withdrawn for want of bullocks, and, after sustaining a severe loss, they were obliged to evacuate the ground they had gained, and retire to a short distance from the field.¹

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¹ Lord
Lake's
Desp. Nov.
2, 1803.
Well. Desp.
iii. 441, 442.

Encouraged by this success, but yet fearful of the onset of the British infantry when it came up, the enemy sent to say, that if certain terms were allowed them, they would deliver up their guns. General Lake, being doubtful of the issue of a second attack, acceded to the proposal, and gave them an hour to carry it into effect; which, however, they took no steps to do. During this interval he formed his little army, consisting of the 76th regiment and seven weak battalions of sepoys, with a few galloper

56.
Desperate
action which
ensued.

in India. "The sepoys," says he, "have behaved excessively well; but from my observations on this day, as well as every other, it is impossible to do great things in a gallant and quick style without Europeans; therefore, if they do not in England think it necessary to send British troops in the proportion of *one to three sepoy regiments*, which is, in fact, as one to six in actual numbers, from the superior strength of the native battalions, *they will stand a good chance of losing their possessions in India*, if a French force once get a footing in India. You may perceive, from the loss of European officers in sepoy regiments, how necessary it is for them to expose themselves; in fact, everything has been done by the example and exertions of the officers, without which we had not been where we are."—LORD LAKE to LORD WELLESLEY, Oct. 10, 1803—*Well. Desp.* iii. 396.

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guns, and three regiments of British and five of native cavalry—in all, four thousand infantry and three thousand five hundred horse—into two columns, and when the time allowed had expired, moved on to the attack. The 76th regiment headed the array, and was directed to move against the enemy's left flank, and assault the village of Laswaree; the second column of infantry and all the cavalry were to support the onset of the first, and take advantage of any confusion which might appear in the enemy's line. With an undaunted step, the 76th, with General Lake and all his staff at their head, advanced against the terrible line of cannon which was planted along the enemy's front: so admirable was their steadiness that a staff officer observed at the moment, as they approached the fire, that an arrow discharged at one end of the line would go through half the feathers of the regiment.* No sooner, however, were they arrived within range of canister-shot than they were received by so tremendous a fire, that in a few minutes a third of their number were struck down; and at this awful moment a large body of the enemy's horse bore down to the charge. Rapidly, however, the men closed to the centre. A close and well-directed volley from this heroic regiment repulsed the attack; but as they retired only to a little distance, and still preserved a menacing attitude on the flank of the advancing column, General Lake ordered them to be charged by the British cavalry.¹

¹ Lord Lake's Desp. Nov. 2, 1803. Wel. Desp. iii. 435, 436.

57.
Final victory of the English.

This momentous duty was instantly and ably performed by the 29th regiment of English dragoons, who by a brilliant charge overthrew the Mahratta horse, and, by clearing the flank of the column of infantry, enabled the successive regiments, as they came up, to deploy. The whole now moved forward at a rapid pace against the enemy's batteries, and, sustaining without flinching

* I received this striking anecdote from the adjutant-general of the army, Lieutenant-colonel Gerard, to whom the words in the text were addressed by Major Lake, the gallant son of the commander-in-chief.

the continued and terrific fire of his artillery, at length, by a sudden rush, made themselves masters of the guns. Even then the left wing did not fly, but commenced, in admirable order, a regular retreat; which, however, was ultimately changed into a rout by the repeated and impetuous charges of the British and native horse, under Colonel Vandeleur. So obstinate was the resistance, so complete the victory, that of seventeen regular battalions who had engaged in the battle, the whole, with the exception of two thousand prisoners, were either killed or wounded; all the guns—seventy in number—forty-four colours, and the whole ammunition and baggage, taken. By this decisive overthrow, not only was the power of Scindiah in the northern provinces completely broken, but the French influence and authority on the banks of the Jumna, which had suddenly grown up to so formidable a height, finally destroyed. But the success was dearly bought by the British army: above eight hundred of that band of heroes had fallen, or were wounded in the fight; the battle was the most severe that had yet been fought in India; Lord Lake avowed, in his secret despatches to the governor-general, that, if the enemy's sepoys had had an adequate appointment of French officers, the result would have been extremely doubtful, and that the victory was owing entirely to the incomparable valour of the native English troops.^{1*}

Successes of a subordinate kind, but nevertheless material to the issue of the campaign, at the same time took place in the eastern provinces. In the beginning of September, a British force under Colonel Harcourt broke up from the Bengal frontier, invaded the Cuttack, and a short time after reached the far-famed city of Juggernaut. Heavy rains for some weeks afterwards prevented further

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¹ Lord
Lake's
Desp. Nov.
2, 1803.
Wel. Desp.
iii. 435,
446.

58.
Conquest of
the Cuttack.

Sept. 7.

* "The action of yesterday has convinced me how *impossible it is to do anything without British troops*; and of them there ought to be a very great proportion. The returns of yesterday will, I fear, prove the necessity of what I say too fully."—LORD LAKE to LORD WELLESLEY, *Secret Despatch*, 2d Nov. 1803—*Well. Desp.* iii. 446.

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1803.

Oct. 10.

Oct. 14.

¹ Wel. Desp.

iii. 432, 433.

operations; but in the end of the month they again advanced, and occupied without resistance the town of Cuttack, and some days afterwards stormed the citadel; and this rich and highly important province—a link lying on the sea-coast between the presidencies of Bengal and Madras—was permanently added to the British dominions.¹

59.

Operations
in the Deccan
under
General
Wellesley.

Aug. 8.

Aug. 10.

Aug. 12.

Aug. 29.

Sept. 2.

Aug. 29.

While this splendid succession of victories was establishing the British power in the north of India, triumphs of an equally brilliant kind signalised their efforts in the western provinces. Operations commenced in the Deccan with the invasion of the territories of the Rajah of Berar, by General Wellesley, at the head of one army, and by Colonel Stevenson with another, on the 8th August. On the following day Wellesley arrived at the town of Ahmednuggur, a strong fortress defended by lofty walls of masonry, supported by towers. Without hesitating an instant, he directed an escalade, which was bravely executed, and proved successful without any very serious loss. Batteries were immediately erected against the citadel, and with such effect that it surrendered at discretion in two days—the garrison of fourteen hundred men being made prisoners. Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar now advanced towards the invader, who soon after took possession, without resistance, of the noble city of Aurnagabad. Scindiah, upon that, moved as if to threaten Hyderabad; but General Wellesley, by marching eastward along the banks of the Godavery, effectually frustrated his design, and, at the same time, covered the advance of two important convoys which were coming up to his army. Jalna, an important fort on the frontier of the Mahratta territory, was soon after carried by Colonel Stevenson by assault; and a few days after, he surprised a considerable detachment of the enemy by a nocturnal attack, and routed them with very heavy loss; while, on the side of Bombay, the fortress of Baroach was carried by storm by Colonel Woodington. But more decisive

events were approaching. The confederate chieftains, who hitherto had merely hovered round the British troops with clouds of horse followed by a few thousand irregular foot, were now joined by the flower of their forces; sixteen battalions of Scindiah's regular infantry, and an immense train of artillery, under French officers, entered their camp, and they exhibited an imposing array of fifty thousand men, of whom thirty thousand were admirable horse, with a hundred pieces of cannon.¹

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¹ Gurw. i.
299, 301,
366, 370.
Scherer, i.
55, 56.

This formidable concentration of force demonstrated the necessity of combined operations by the British generals; and, with a view to these, a conference took place between General Wellesley and Colonel Stevenson, on the 21st September. It was then agreed that a joint attack should be made on the enemy, who were about a day and a half's journey off, and reported to be encamped at Bokerdun. The two generals separated on the day following, and advanced towards the concentrated point by different routes—Colonel Stevenson by the western, General Wellesley by the eastern road, having a range of hills between them. The motive for this separation, though it may be doubted whether it was a sufficient one for a division in the neighbourhood of so great a force, was the difficulty of getting forward the united army through the narrow defiles by which both roads passed, and the chance that, if the two divisions moved by one line, the enemy would retire by another, and the opportunity of striking a decisive blow be lost. In moving forward thus parallel to each other, the two corps were not more than twelve miles asunder; but the intervening hills rendered any mutual support impossible. In presence of an able and enterprising enemy, their position offered the same advantages which the division of the Austrian army by the lake of Garda presented to the blows of Napoleon.² * Upon arriving within five miles of the enemy, General Wellesley received intelligence that their horse

60.

Movements
which led to
the battle of
Assaye.

Sept. 22.

² Gurw. i.
386, 401.
Scherer, i.
57, 58. Wel.
Desp. iii.
372.

* *Ante*, Chap. xx. § 103.

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had retreated, and that the infantry alone remained, exposed to the chance of defeat if quickly assailed. As the chief strength of the Mahrattas lay in their cavalry, the English general resolved upon an immediate attack, and despatched orders to Colonel Stevenson to co-operate in the proposed enterprise.

61.
Danger of
the British.

When he arrived, however, in sight of the enemy, he found their whole army, infantry and cavalry, with an immense artillery, drawn up in a strong position, with the river Kaitna, which could be crossed only by a single ford, flowing along their front. The sight was enough to appal the stoutest heart: thirty thousand horse, in one magnificent mass, crowded the right; a dense array of infantry, powerfully supported by artillery, formed the centre and left; the gunners were beside their pieces, and a hundred pieces of cannon in front of the line, stood ready to vomit forth death upon the assailants. Wellington paused for a moment, impressed but not daunted by the sight. His whole force, as Colonel Stevenson had not come up, did not exceed eight thousand men, of whom sixteen hundred were cavalry: the effective native British were not above fifteen hundred; and he had only seventeen pieces of cannon. But, feeling at once that a retreat in presence of so prodigious a force of cavalry was impossible, and that the most audacious course was, in such circumstances, the most prudent, he ordered an immediate attack. “*Dux cautus et providens, Scipio, victus necessitatibus, temerarium capit consilium ut statim hosti obviam iret: et, quocumque occurreret loco, prælium consereret. ‘Scio,’ inquit, ‘audax videri consilium: sed in rebus asperis et tenui spe, fortissima quæque consilia tutissima sunt: quia, si in occasionis momento cujus prætervolat opportunitas, cunctatus paullulum fueris, nequidquam mox omissam quæras.*”¹*

¹ Livy, xxv. Gen. Wellesley's Desp. Nov. 1, 1803, and 24th Sept. 1803. Wel. Desp. iii. 372. Gurw. i. 386, 401. Scherer, i. 57, 58.

* “Scipio, a cautious and prudent general, overborne by necessity, adopted

Wellington wisely determined to direct his attack against the Mahratta left, as the infantry, which was there crowded together, presented less formidable obstacles than the immense mass of horse which glittered on the right. With this view, the British troops were moved off to their own right: the lateral movement being covered by the cavalry and the Mysore horse; and the whole crossed the Kaitna at the ford, and immediately formed in two lines, with the cavalry in reserve, on the enemy's extreme left. The confederates upon this altered their front, and, instead of remaining parallel to the Kaitna, formed a diagonal line across the plain from that river to the village of ASSAYE. The guns were disposed along the whole front, and presented one immense battery, formidable alike by its numbers and the weight of its metal. With the pickets of the 85th and whole 74th in front on the right, and the 78th on the left, the British line marched swiftly forward to the attack; but, when they came within range, their guns were almost immediately dismounted by the superior fire of the enemy's artillery. Nothing, however, could arrest the steady advance of the pickets and 74th regiment, who moved direct upon Assaye with the utmost intrepidity. But as they approached the enemy, and got within reach of their grape-shot, the execution became so severe that frightful chasms were soon made in their ranks, and a large body of Mahratta horse, which had got round the village unperceived, taking advantage of the openings thus made, dashed through with fearful effect,¹

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62.

Battle of

Assaye.

Sept. 23.

¹ Welles-
ley's Letter
to Sir T.
Munro.
Gurw. i.
401, and
Mem. *ibid.*
i. 391, 394.

the bold counsel of anticipating the enemy, and assailing him wheresoever he could be reached. 'I know,' said he, 'such a step appears audacious, but in difficult circumstances and with little hope, the boldest counsels are the safest. If you hesitate and allow the moment of action to pass away, you will wait in vain for its recurrence.'—LIVY. Tasso expressed the same idea in the well-known lines;—

"A incontrare i nemici e 'l nostro fato
Andianne pur deliberati insieme;
Che spesso avvien che ne' maggior perigli
Sono i piu audaci gli ottimi consigli."

TASSO, *Gerus. Lib. vi. 6.*

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63.
Imminent
danger and
ultimate
victory of
the English.

and a forest of uplifted sabres was seen in the centre of the British line.*

All seemed lost; but at that critical moment Wellington ordered up the British and native cavalry, under Colonel Maxwell. On they came at the gallop: the gallant 19th dragoons, headed by their heroic leader, bore down upon the Mahratta horse, now disordered by success, with irresistible force, and drove them off the field headlong into the Juah. The 74th and pickets, relieved from their assailants, now rallied with admirable discipline; and the second line coming up, a great part of the guns which had spread such havoc through the field were taken. Still, however, the enemy held Assaye, with a large body of infantry; and the cannon placed around it thundered on the attacking corps with terrific effect. But at that important juncture Wellington, having taken the guns on his left, assailed it with the 78th and a regiment of native horse, with such resolution that that important post was at length carried by storm. In this desperate conflict, Wellington, who led on the gallant 78th regiment in person, had a horse shot under him. The enemy resisted to the very last—the artillerymen being bayoneted at their guns; the infantry in many places lying in files on the ground, as they had stood in their ranks. During the retreat a large body of foot-soldiers collected together, and for a short time showed a determined front; but they were dispersed by a brilliant charge of Colonel Maxwell with the unconquerable 19th, in which that gallant officer lost his life.¹

¹ Gurw. i.
401, 403,
and 386.
Wel. Desp.
iii. 669.
Gen. Wel-
lesley to Sir
T. Munro.

Some of Scindiah's gunners, when the flight was general, fell on the earth and feigned to be dead, to avoid the

* The extraordinary loss sustained by the 74th on this occasion, was chiefly owing to the officer who led the pickets not having followed out Wellington's instructions, which were to make the attack on Assaye by a circuitous sweep, which would have kept the men for the greater part of the way out of the reach of cannon-shot; instead of which, carried away by a heroic courage, he moved direct upon the village, over a space swept like a glaciis by the cannon of the enemy. "I lament," said Wellington, "the consequences of this mistake; but I must acknowledge, it was not possible for a man to lead a body into a hotter fire than he did the pickets on that day against Assaye. One

sabres of the cavalry; but no sooner had the horsemen passed than they started up, turned the guns about, and opened a destructive fire on the backs of the advancing enemy. Indignant at the fraud, the British soldiers wheeled about, again stormed the batteries, and bayoneted the treacherous gunners at their pieces. At length the enemy fled on all sides, just as night set in, leaving in the hands of the British ninety-seven pieces of cannon, and almost all the ammunition and stores of the army. The Mahrattas had two thousand men slain on the field, and six thousand wounded; but the British loss was very severe, and the victor found himself weakened by above fifteen hundred killed and wounded, embracing more than a third of the whole British force.¹ "Never," says Southey, "was victory gained under so many disadvantages. Superior arms and discipline have often provided against as great a numerical difference, but it would be describing the least part of this day's glory to say that the number of the enemy was as five to one; they had disciplined troops in the field, under European officers, who more than doubled the British force; they had a hundred pieces of cannon, which were served with fearful skill, and which the British, without the aid of artillery, twice won with the bayonet."²*

After this decisive overthrow, the confederates retired twelve miles from the field of battle, where they passed the night; but no sooner did they hear of the approach of Colonel Stevenson, who, with eight thousand men, was advancing against them, than they fled headlong down the Ghauts, and reached the bottom in great confusion, without either cannon or ammunition. These losses, however,

company of the pickets alone, consisting of one officer and fifty men, lost the officer and forty-four rank and file."—WELLINGTON'S *Mem.* 24th Sept. 1803; GURWOOD, i. 393, 403.

* "Their fire," said the Duke of Wellington, "was so heavy, I much doubted at the time whether I should be able to prevail on the troops to advance; and all agree that the battle was the fiercest that has ever been seen in India. Our troops behaved admirably—the sepoys astonished me."—WELLINGTON to MAJOR MALCOLM, October 3, 1803; GURWOOD, i. 437.

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64.

Results of
the battle.

¹ Gen. Wellesley's
Desp. to Sir
T. Munro.
Gurw. i.
401, 403;
and i. 386.
Wel. Desp.
iii. 669.
Scherer, i.
60, 61.

² Quarterly
Rev. xiii.
225.

65.
Operations
after the
battle of
Assaye.

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Oct. 21.

Nov. 11.

Nov. 23.

Nov. 28.

were soon restored, and the exhausted state of both corps of the British army rendered any effective pursuit of an enemy still so immensely superior in cavalry altogether impossible. Colonel Stevenson soon after reduced Asseeghur, an important fortress in the Rajah of Berar's dominions; while Wellington, by a series of masterly manœuvres, defended the territories of his allies, the Nizam and the Soubadar of the Deccan, and threw back the clouds of the Mahratta horse on their own territories. After some weeks' marching and countermarching, Scindiah, disgusted with a war in which no plunder was to be obtained, and of which the burden as well as dangers fell entirely on his own dominions, made proposals for peace. An armistice, on certain terms, was agreed to by the British general; but the conditions not having being complied with by the Mahratta chiefs, he resolved not to lose the opportunity which presented itself of determining their indecision, by striking a decisive blow against their united forces before they were thoroughly recovered from their late defeat. Having effected a junction with Colonel Stevenson, the whole moved against the enemy; and late on the evening of the 28th, after a fatiguing march in a sultry day, when the Mysore horse, which were skirmishing with the Mahratta cavalry in front, cleared away, a long line of cavalry, infantry, and artillery could be distinctly perceived, extending about five miles in length, in the plains in front of ARGAM. Though the men were much exhausted by the heat, Wellington deemed the opportunity too favourable to be lost; for he had fourteen battalions of infantry, and six regiments of cavalry—in all about fourteen thousand men—besides four thousand irregular horse; and the enemy did not exceed forty thousand. Rapidly, therefore, the formation was made: the infantry, with the 74th and 78th on the right, and in advance, so as to enter first into action; the cavalry in the second line following the first in echelon;¹ the Mysore and Mogul horse on the left, thrown back, so

¹ Wellington's Despatch. Gurw. i. 528, 531.

as rather to protect the rear than enter into the fight, and opposite to the immense mass of Mahratta horse which crowded the enemy's right wing.

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As the British line advanced, the European regiments in front were received by a heavy fire from the batteries placed along the front of the enemy's line; and shortly after they were assailed in flank with the utmost fury by a large body of Persians, who engaged in a close conflict, hand to hand, with the British. After a fierce struggle, however, the Asiatic scimitar yielded to the European bayonet, and the assailants were almost wholly destroyed. Three battalions of sepoy, who succeeded next in the column, then advanced in echelon in good order, but no sooner came into cannon-shot than they disbanded and fled, though they had advanced bravely through a much heavier fire at Assaye. Wellington, however, was at hand to repair the confusion. Rallying the fugitives, and advancing at their head himself, he soon restored the day: a disorderly charge of Scindiah's horse on the left of the line was repulsed by the steadiness of another battalion of the native troops; and the British regiments in advance having carried the principal batteries which played upon their line, the whole Mahratta force went off in confusion, leaving in the hands of the victors thirty-eight pieces of cannon, and all their ammunition. Had there been an hour more of daylight, or the delay consequent on the breaking of the sepoy regiments not occurred, the whole of the enemy would have been destroyed; as it was, the pursuit was actively continued for many miles by the British cavalry, by moonlight, and all their elephants and baggage taken. But the singular failure of the three native regiments, albeit veteran soldiers who had formerly distinguished themselves, demonstrates the necessity of a large proportion of European to native troops in all Indian campaigns; for we have the authority of Wellington for the assertion, that if he had not been at hand to repair the disorder, the day would have been lost.¹

66.
Battle of
Argaum.
Nov. 28.

¹ Wellington to Major Shaw, Dec. 2, 1803. Gurw. i. 529, 534.

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67.

Siege and
capture of
Gawilghur.

Dec. 6.

Dec. 13.

Dec. 15.

On the very day after the battle, Wellington marched to invest Gawilgur. This celebrated fortress is situated in a range of mountains between the sources of the rivers Poorna and Taptee, and stands on a lofty pile of rocky eminences, surrounded by a triple circuit of walls, rising from the edge of inaccessible precipices. The entrances to this almost impregnable stronghold are by three narrow and steep paths, winding for a long ascent through the cross-fire of batteries, and intersected at various points by strong iron gates. After reconnoitring the different sides of this formidable fortress, Wellington resolved to attack it on the northern front, where the ground is comparatively level, though to reach that quarter required a circuit of thirty miles, over rugged intervening mountains. Thither the heavy ordnance and stores were dragged, over heights hitherto deemed impassable for all but foot-soldiers, through roads made by themselves; and at length, after great exertions, a sufficient number of cannon were placed in the trenches on that side to commence battering. With such vigour was the fire sustained, though nine heavy guns only had been brought round, that by the evening of the 14th the breach in the outer wall was declared practicable. Arrangements were immediately made for the storm, which were carried into execution on the following morning, with the most perfect success. The troops on the north side, headed by the flank companies of the 94th regiment, mounted the breach with irresistible vigour, while a false attack on the south distracted the attention of the enemy. The outer wall was surmounted by escalade, the inner gates were blown open; and at the moment when the fugitive garrison were attempting to escape by the southern ports, they were met by the victorious British, who in that quarter also had made their way in, and all made prisoners.¹

¹ Wellington's Desp.
Dec. 15,
1803. Gurw.
i. 550, 554.

The capture of this stronghold, deemed over all India impregnable, following such a train of disasters, at length

broke the proud spirit of the Mahratta princes. Negotiations in real earnest were now resumed, and a treaty was concluded two days afterwards, between Wellington and the Rajah of Berar. By this pacification it was stipulated that the Rajah should cede to the Company all the territories which he had possessed in the Deccan, the province of Cuttack, and various districts to the south of the hills of Gawilghur. While by a subsequent treaty with Scindiah, all his territories in the Doab, between the Jumna and the Ganges; the fortresses of Baroach and Ahmednuggur, with their circumjacent territory; the whole district below the Adjunttee hills and the Godavery river, were made over to the Company. By these glorious treaties, territories containing thirty-two thousand square miles, and yielding, even under all the disadvantages of the Mahratta rule, nearly three millions sterling a-year of revenue, including Delhi, the ancient capital of the Mogul emperors, Agra, Gwalior, and many other fortresses, were acquired by the British government, and their influence was rendered paramount through the whole north of Hindostan.^{1*}

The termination of the Mahratta war, though it established the political supremacy of the British in India, and spread the fame of their valour over all Asia, yet left the government involved in considerable difficulties. The expenses of moving such large bodies of men to such immense distances was very great; and as the English, reversing the usual principles of Indian warfare, uniformly paid for everything which they required, their

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1803.

67.

These disasters compel the confederates to sue for peace. Its terms.
Dec. 17.

Dec. 30.

¹ See the Treaties in Gurw. i. 555, 571, and Auber, i. 323, 326.

69.

Pecuniary embarrassments of the government on the conclusion of the war.

* By these treaties certain districts were to be ceded by the Mahratta chiefs to the Nizam. His minister, Mohiput Ram, was most anxious to secure information as to what particular countries or districts were likely to be ceded, and at a secret conference, offered Wellington ten lacs of rupees (£70,000) to obtain it. "Can you keep a secret?" asked the English general.—"Yes," replied Mohiput Ram.—"So can I," answered the general. So universal is corruption at the native courts, that they have no conception that any functionary, how high soever, is above it. The conquests of the English were mainly ascribed by them to the incorruptible integrity of their officers, both civil and military, and the fidelity to engagements of their government.—AUBER, ii. 325.

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march, though hailed with blessings by the natives of the conquered provinces, proved extremely burdensome to the Company's treasury. The dangers of the war had been strongly felt in India, and seriously exaggerated in the mother country. The Company's stock had fallen in consequence, since the commencement of hostilities, from two hundred and fifteen to one hundred and sixty; no less than £1,700,000 in specie had been remitted by the Court of Directors in the course of the year: and, large as this sum was, it was exceeded by the wants of the Indian treasury. Mercantile men, unacquainted with the real state of affairs in the East, who estimated the propriety of all measures by their effect upon the value of their stock, or the amount of their dividends, and were incapable of appreciating the present sacrifices requisite to produce ultimate security to so vast a dominion, murmured loudly at these effects of Lord Wellesley's administration; and the opinion became general in Great Britain, that his inordinate ambition had involved us in endless contests, which would ultimately prove fatal to our empire in the East. So vexatious were the restrictions with which his administration was surrounded, and so disproportioned the ideas of the Directors to the grandeur or the real nature of their situation, that he tendered his resignation to government, and was only prevailed on to continue at the head of affairs in India on an assurance that, as soon as the present complicated transactions with the Mahrattas were brought to a conclusion, he would be relieved from his duties.¹

¹ Auber, ii. 333, 341.
Wel. Desp. iii. 3, 24,
Introd.

70.
Negotia-
tions and
rupture with
Holkar.
Feb. 27,
1804.

Meanwhile the treaty already mentioned had been concluded with Scindiah, by which it was stipulated that he should cede Gwalior and Gohud, and receive a subsidiary force; in other words, become entirely dependent on the British government. These events, however, brought the English in contact with a still more formidable power, whose hostility it hitherto had been their

studious care to avoid. Holkar commanded a powerful army, which was posted in a threatening position on the frontier of Scindiah's territory ; and as he held several valuable possessions in the Doab, which had recently been ceded to the British government, it was indispensable to come to some terms to accommodate the conflicting interests of the parties. Though that wily chieftain, with the characteristic dissimulation of a Mahratta, professed the utmost desire to cultivate the friendship of the Company, it soon appeared that he had resolved on the most determined hostility. Secret information reached the governor-general, that he was underhand instigating the tributaries and dependants of the English to enter into a confederacy against them ; and he even wrote to General Wellesley, threatening to overrun the British provinces with an innumerable army.* At length he openly sent an agent to Scindiah's camp to solicit that chieftain to renew hostilities with the British, and at the same time he began plundering the territories of their ally, the Rajah of Jypore. Justly considering these acts as equivalent to a declaration of war, the commander-in-chief advanced into Holkar's territory.

General Wellesley was invested with the general direction of affairs, military as well as political, in the Deccan, and the territories of the Peishwa and Mahratta chiefs ; but he had no longer any active command in the war, and the chief weight of the contest fell on General Lake in the northern provinces. Arduous as the conflict with

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¹ Malcolm,
315, 316.
Auber, ii.
341, 345.
Wel. Desp.
iv.

* "Countries of many hundred miles in extent shall be overrun and plundered ; Lord Lake shall not have leisure to breathe for a moment ; and calamities will fall on the backs of human beings in continual war by the attacks of my army, which overwhelms like the waves of the sea."—HOLKAR to GENERAL WELLESLEY, Feb. 21, 1804 ; MALCOLM, 315. In his letters to the Indian chiefs, tributary of England, he uniformly styled the English "infidel Christians, the enemies of the Mussulman faith ;"—"seditious men, whom they should be prepared to do distinguished service against ;" and spoke of its being the object of the religion and the rule of Mussulmans, that the whole body of the Faithful having assembled together, they should be employed, heart and soul, in extirpating the profligate infidels.—See *Intercepted Corresp. of HOLKAR*—Wel. Desp. iv. 48, 49.

71.
Commencement of the war with Holkar. Its arduous character.

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Tippoo Sultaun and Scindiah had been, this last strife was still more formidable, from the recurrence of the Asiatic chief to that system of warfare in which the strength of the East, from the earliest ages, has consisted. Without despising the aid of disciplined battalions and a powerful train of artillery, it was the policy of Holkar to trust chiefly to his cavalry ; to relieve his army of those encumbrances which retarded their march, and seldom failed to fall a prey in regular battles to the swift advance and daring courage of the British soldiers ; and to trust for success to the encompassing the European hosts, like the Roman legions by the Parthian cavalry, with clouds of light horse, who could not be reached by the heavy-armed European squadrons. True, these irregular bodies could not withstand the charge of the English or sepoy dragoons, any more than the Saracens could the shock of the steel-clad Crusaders of Europe ; but they seldom awaited their approach, and, by hovering round their columns, and cutting off their foraging and watering parties, frequently reduced to extreme distress bodies of men before whom they could not have stood a quarter of an hour in regular combat.¹

¹ Malcolm,
316. Auber,
ii. 345.

72.
Holkar's
strength and
its causes.
Defeat and
capture of
Mohammed
Beg Khan.

Holkar's territories, though extensive, lay in different parts of the Deccan and Hindostan ; they were, for the most part, in a neglected state, from the devastation and military license to which, from time immemorial, all the Mahratta provinces had been subjected. He was a usurper of his brother's rights ; his own family had never risen to the rank of considerable potentates ; and his present power was mainly owing to the vast concourse of predatory horsemen who, on the conclusion of peace by Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar, flocked to his standard as the only one which promised a continuance of violence and plunder. Vast bodies of these irregular but formidable freebooters swarmed in all the northern parts of the Deccan and over Hindostan ; and the number of them, amounting to little short of a hundred thousand,

whom this popular chieftain had collected under his banners, was so disproportioned to the resources of his dominions, that foreign conquest had become to him, as to Napoleon, a matter of necessity. Bands of these plunderers, before they were attracted by the reputation of the Mahratta chief, had already appeared in various quarters, spreading terror and devastation wherever they went; and one, ten thousand strong, which had passed the Kistna, burst into the British dependencies, and was making for the Toombudra, with the design of crossing the Company's frontier, when it was overtaken by General Campbell, and entirely routed by a skilfully conducted surprise before sunrise, with the loss of three thousand killed and wounded. Twenty thousand head of cattle taken in their camp, demonstrated the vast extent of the depredation which in a few days these marauding horsemen could commit. Mohammed Beg Khan, the leader of the party, was wounded and made prisoner, and the whole body dispersed.¹

Important as this early success was in arresting the destructive inroads of the Mahratta freebooters, it was attended with one bad effect, in leading the British commanders to underrate the enemy with whom they had to deal; inducing the belief that the strength of their confederacy had been broken, by the reduction of Scindiah's and the Rajah of Berar's power; and that, by a simultaneous invasion of his territories by comparatively small bodies of troops, converging from different directions, Holkar would speedily be reduced to submission. The plan of the campaign was arranged on these principles. Lord Lake, with the army of Bengal, about ten thousand strong, was to advance from the neighbourhood of Delhi, southward into Holkar's country; while lesser bodies, acting in concert with Scindiah's forces, pressed upon it from Guzerat, Malwa, and the Deccan. Colonel Murray, with two European and six native regiments, about six thousand men, was to advance from Guzerat; while Colonel

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Dec. 30.
¹ General
Campbell's
Desp. Dec.
30, 1803.
Wel. Desp.
v. 2, 3.

73.
Plan of the
campaign
against
Holkar. Its
errors and
early disas-
ters.

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1804.

April 23.

May 16.

Monson, with the 76th regiment and four battalions of sepoy, about three thousand men, moved upon Jyenagur, in order to menace the rear of Holkar's main army, which was ravaging the country in that neighbourhood. These movements had the effect of inducing the Mahratta chief to retreat, which he did to the eastward, with extraordinary rapidity ; while General Lake, following in his footsteps, carried by assault the important fort of Rampoora, and expelled the enemy from all his possessions in that part of Hindostan. So completely was government impressed with the idea that Holkar could nowhere face the British troops, and that a short campaign at the close of the rainy season would effectually reduce his power, that the troops, on its commencement, were everywhere withdrawn to their original stations : * General Lake returned to his cantonments near Delhi, while Colonel Monson was left in the province of Malwa, above two hundred miles in advance, in a position which it was thought would effectually preclude the possibility of the predatory chieftain's return toward his own territories.¹

¹ Lord Wellesley to Secret Committee, June 1804. Wel. Desp. iv. 115, 127.

74.
Holkar's
able con-
duct. De-
feat of Col.
Fawcett in
Bundel-
cund.

Holkar's conduct now demonstrated that he was intimately acquainted with the art of war, the principles of which are often as thoroughly understood by illiterate chieftains, to whom native sagacity and practical experience have unfolded them, as by those who have most learnedly studied the enterprises of others. Rapidly concentrating his desultory bands, he fell with an overwhelming force, as soon as the decline of the rainy season would admit of military operations, upon Colonel Monson's division, left in this perilous position so far in advance ; while a subordinate force, five thousand strong, made a

* " The necessity of repelling Holkar's banditti from the frontier of Hindostan, and of reducing him to a peaceable conduct, will not lead to any serious interruption of peace, and will probably tend to consolidate our connexion with Scindiah. The commander-in-chief, with the greater part of the main army in Hindostan, has returned to the cantonment of Cawnpore, and my attention is now directed to the desirable object of *withdrawing the whole army from the field*, and reducing the military charges."—LORD WELLESLEY to LORD CASTLE-REAGH, 9th July 1804—*Well. Desp.* iv. 131.

diversion by an irruption into the province of Bundelcund. A British detachment, under Colonel Smith, of three hundred men, was there almost entirely cut off by the sudden attack of these freebooters, and with it six guns and a considerable quantity of ammunition were captured : a disgrace which was the more sensibly felt, as Colonel Fawcett, who with five battalions lay within a few miles, and had, by imprudently separating his infantry from his artillery, brought about this disaster, instead of attempting to avenge it, commenced a retreat. Such was the consternation produced by this unwonted calamity, that it was only by the firm countenance and intrepid conduct of Captain Baillie, who commanded a small subsidiary force at Banda, the capital, in the southern portion of the province, that subordination was maintained ; and the Mahrattas at length retired, finding a further advance hazardous, leaving their course everywhere marked by conflagration and ruin.¹

CHAP.
XLIX.1804.
May 22.

¹ Colonel
Fawcett's
Desp. May
22, 1804.
Wel. Desp.
iv. 72, 73,
75, 127.

This disgrace was but the prelude to still greater reverses, in which, however, the high character and undaunted courage of the British troops remained untarnished. Colonel Monson, having been joined by the troops under General Don, which had captured Rampoorra—which raised his force to about four thousand men, with fifteen guns, besides three thousand irregular horse—advanced through the strong pass of Mokundra, which commanded the entrance through the mountains into Hindostan from the westward ; and, contrary to the directions of General Lake, who had stationed him only to protect that defile, still pushing on fifty miles further, carried by assault the important fortress of Heinglaisgush, a stronghold of Holkar's, garrisoned by eleven hundred of his best troops. The Mahratta chief meanwhile lay at Malwa with his whole disposable force, which exceeded forty thousand men, of whom twenty thousand were disciplined infantry, with one hundred and sixty guns. With this immense body he rapidly approached the

75.
Advance of
Colonel
Monson's
division.

June 26.

July 2.

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XLIX.

1804.

English general; and the exaggerated rumours which preceded his march as to the strength of the Mahratta host, impressed the latter with the idea that that he had no chance of safety but in an immediate retreat. Colonel Murray, who, with a powerful force, including fifteen hundred Europeans, was to have advanced from Guzerat into such a position as to have been able to render him assistance if required, had, instead of performing his part of the general plan, been unfortunately induced to fall back; and thus Monson was left alone to withstand the whole shock of Holkar's force. His troops, however, though not a fifth part of the enemy in point of number, were highly disciplined, admirably equipped, and inured to victory; and, by a daring advance upon the Mahratta chief, especially when embarrassed with getting his immense artillery across the Chumbul river, then swollen by rains, he might perhaps have achieved as decisive success as, with a similar numerical inferiority, Wellington and Lake obtained at Assaye and Laswaree.¹

¹ Lord
Lake's
Account,
Wel. Desp.
v. 288, 290.
Ibid. iv.
327, 329.

76.

His disasters
and defeat.

But it then appeared of what importance is military skill and moral resolution in Indian warfare, and how much the brilliant accomplishment of Lord Wellesley's victories had been dependent on the daring energy, which, seizing the initiative, never lost it till the enemy was destroyed. Monson was brave as any officer in the English army — second to none in undaunted valour at storming a breach; but he wanted the rarer quality of moral intrepidity, and the power of adopting great designs on his own responsibility. On the 6th July, Holkar was engaged in crossing the Chumbul; the fortunate moment of attack was allowed to escape, never to return, and two days afterwards the English general commenced his retreat. He did what ordinary officers would have done at Assaye, when it was ascertained Stevenson's division could not come up; and what was the result? In a few hours the subsidiary horse, now four thousand strong, which was left to observe the enemy, was enveloped by

July 8.

clouds of the Mahratta cavalry, and, after a bloody struggle, cut to pieces with their gallant commander, Lieutenant Lucan, whose individual heroism long averted the disaster. The infantry and guns retired without molestation to the strong Mokundra pass; and several attacks made by Holkar on the outposts stationed there, were repulsed with great slaughter. Despairing, however, after the recent disaster, of being able to make good the pass against the enemy when his infantry and numerous artillery should come up, Monson resumed his retreat, a few days after, to Kotah, and from thence to Rampoorah, with great precipitation. Such were the obstacles presented by the horrible state of the roads and incessant rains, during the latter part of this journey, that the whole guns, fifteen in number, were abandoned, and fell into the enemy's hands.¹

CHAP.
XLIX.

1804.

July 9.

July 12.

¹ Lord Lake's Account, Wel. Desp. v. 288, 290. Lord Wellesley to Secret Committee, Ibid. iv. 273, 330.

No sooner was General, now Lord Lake apprised of the commencement of this retreat, than he despatched two fresh battalions and three thousand irregular horse to reinforce his lieutenant; and with such expedition did they advance, that they reached Rampoorah a few days after the retiring column had arrived there. Still Monson deemed it impossible to make a stand; and, on the 21st August, after leaving a sufficient garrison in that fortress, he resumed his march for the British frontier. On the day following, his progress was stopped by the Bannas river, which was so swelled by the rains as to be no longer fordable; and during the delay occasioned by this obstacle, the whole of the enemy's force arrived close to the British detachment. The situation of the latter was now truly frightful; in their front was a raging torrent, in their rear twenty thousand horsemen, continually receiving fresh accessions of strength in infantry and guns, as these successively came up. The river having at length become fordable, four battalions crossed over; and the enemy, seeing his advantage, immediately commenced a furious attack on the single battalion and pickets, which now

76.
Desperate action on the Bannas river.

Aug. 22.

CHAP.
XLIX.1804.
Aug. 24.

remained alone on the other side. With such heroic constancy, however, was this unequal contest maintained by these brave men, that they not only repulsed the whole attacks made upon them, but, pursuing their success, captured several of the enemy's guns: an event which clearly demonstrated what results might have followed the adoption of a vigorous offensive in the outset, when the troops were undiminished in strength and unbroken in spirit. As it was, however, this little phalanx, being unsupported, was unable to follow up its success, and in the course of falling back to the river and effecting their passage, had to sustain an arduous conflict, and experienced a frightful loss.¹

¹ Colonel
Monson's
Desp. Wel.
Desp. iv.
199.

77.
Dreadful
disasters of
the close of
the retreat.

Meanwhile Captain Nicholl, with the treasure of the army and six companies of sepoy, who had been first ferried across, proceeded to Khoshalgur, where they were attacked by a large body of Scindiah's troops, who, with the characteristic faithlessness and rapacity of Mahrattas, assailed their allies in their distress in hope of plunder, and being beat off, openly joined Holkar's camp. Almost all the irregular horse, which had come up to Rampoor, soon after deserted to the enemy; and even some companies of sepoy, shaken by the horrors of the retreat, abandoned their colours and followed their example, though in general the conduct of these faithful troops was exemplary in the extreme. Abandoned by his horse, Colonel Monson, on his route from Khoshalgur to the British frontier, formed his whole men into a square, with the ammunition and bullocks in the centre, and in that order retreated for several days, almost always fighting with the enemy, and surrounded by fifteen thousand indefatigable horsemen, who were constantly repulsed with invincible constancy by the rolling fire of the sepoy. At length, however, this vigorous pursuit was discontinued; the firm array of the British dissolved as they entered their own territories;² great numbers perished of fatigue or by the sword of the

² Colonel
Monson's
Desp. Sept.
2, 1804.
Wel. Desp.
iv. 199, Lord
Lake's Desp.
July 4, 1805.
Wel. Desp.
v. 289, 292.
Lord Wel-
lesley to
Secret Com-
mittee, v.
233, 343.

pursuers, others allowed themselves to fall into the hands of the enemy ; and the sad remnant of a brilliant division, which had mustered in all, with its reinforcements on the retreat, six thousand regular and as many irregular troops, now reduced to a thousand or twelve hundred men, without cannon or ammunition, arrived at Agra in a scattered and disorderly manner about the end of August.

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1804.

Then was seen in clear colours the precarious tenure by which our empire in India is held, and the indispensable necessity of those vigorous measures in former times, which, to an inexperienced observer, might wear the aspect of rashness. The overthrow of Monson's division resounded through Hindostan from sea to sea. Great as had been the disasters of the retreat, they were magnified by the voice of fame, ever ready to augment the extent of public and private calamity, and by the sinister reports of the native powers, whose wishes, father to their thoughts, represented the British empire in Asia as tottering to its fall. The general consternation was increased by the cruelties exercised by Holkar on the prisoners of all descriptions who fell into his hands ; the Europeans were immediately put to death, and the natives who refused to enter his service, mutilated in the most shocking manner. Everywhere an alarming fermentation was apparent. The conduct of several of the allied states was such as to afford just grounds to distrust their fidelity ; that of others was verging on open hostility. Scindiah, so far from acting up to the spirit or even letter of his alliance, was secretly intriguing with, and even publicly assisting, the enemy ; the Rajah of Bhurtpore, already repenting of his recent treaty, was supporting him with his treasures and his arms ; the spirit of disaffection was found to have spread to some of the chiefs of the newly acquired British provinces ; even the fidelity of the sepoys was not everywhere proof against the seductions or threats of the enemy ;¹ and that general despondency prevailed which is

78.

Alarming
fermenta-
tion through
the whole of
India.

¹ Lord Lake to Lord Wellesley, July 1, 1805. Lord Wel. to General Lake, Sept. 11, 1804. Ibid. iv. 205.

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1804.

79.

Generous
conduct and
able resolu-
tion of Lord
Wellesley
and Lord
Lake.

so often at once the forerunner and the cause of public calamity.

But the British government in India was at that period in the hands of men whom no reverse could daunt, whose energy and foresight were equal to any emergency. Generously resolving to take their full share in the responsibility of all the measures which had turned out so unfortunately; determining to screen the commander from all blame, even for those details of execution which were necessarily intrusted to himself; they set themselves vigorously to stem the progress of disaster.* The cause which had led to it was obvious; it was the reversing the principles which had produced the triumphs of Delhi and Laswaree. These glorious days had been the result of striking with an adequate force at the heart of the enemy's power, and suspending, or even neglecting, all minor considerations to accomplish that grand object: the present misfortunes were the consequence of attacking from four different quarters at once, with forces inadequate to victory, if singly brought into action; trusting for success to their combined operation, and advancing one column, alone and unsupported, into the heart of the enemy's power. The British victories had been the result of the strategy which caused Napoleon to

* "From the first hour of Colonel Monson's retreat," said Marquis Wellesley to Lord Lake, "I always augured the ruin of that detachment: if any part is saved, I deem it so much gain. Whatever may have been his fate, or whatever the result of his misfortunes to my own forces, I will endeavour to shield his character from obloquy, nor will I attempt the mean purpose of sacrificing his reputation to save mine. His former services and zeal entitle him to this indulgence; and, however I may lament or suffer from his errors, I will not reproach his memory if he be lost, or his bravery if he survives. We must endeavour rather to retrieve than to blame what is past; and, under your auspices, I entertain no doubt of success. Every hour, however, which shall be left to this plunderer will be marked with some calamity; we must expect a general defection of our allies, and even confusion in our own territories, unless we can attack Holkar's main force *immediately* with decisive success. I perfectly agree with you; the first object must be the defeat of Holkar's infantry in the field, and to take his guns. Holkar defeated, all alarm and danger will instantly vanish. Even a doubtful battle would be perilous: we must therefore look steadfastly at that grand object, and if we accomplish it, every other will be easy."—LORD WELLESLEY to LORD LAKE, *Sept. 11, 1804; Well. Desp.* iv. 205.

At the same time Lord Lake wrote to Lord Wellesley:—"The first object, in

triumph at Ulm and Jena: their misfortunes, of the system which, for twenty years, had chained disaster to the Austrian standards. Wellesley resolved instantly to return to this enlightened plan of operations, from which, in an evil hour, under the influence of undue contempt of the enemy, his lieutenants without his orders had departed. "The success of your noble triumphs of last year," said he to Lord Lake, "proceeded chiefly from your vigorous system of attack. In every war the native states will always gain courage in proportion as we shall allow them to attack us; and I know that you will always bear this principle in mind, especially against such a power as Holkar."¹

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¹ Lord Wellesley to Lord Lake, Sept. 11, 1804. Wel. Desp. iv. 207, and 191, 192.

Proceeding on these just and manly principles, every exertion was made to reinforce the main army under Lord Lake, then lying at Cawnpore, and put it into a condition speedily to take the field. It was full time that some decisive effort should be made to retrieve affairs; for the British empire in Hindostan was, in truth, in a very critical situation. Rapidly following up his success, Holkar pursued the remains of the beaten army to the banks of the Jumna; and on the British cavalry under Lord Lake approaching his position, he drew off—the infantry and guns taking the direction of

80.
Advance of Holkar to Delhi. Sept. 12.

my opinion, is to destroy Holkar: I shall therefore do everything in my power to bring him to action at an early period, which, by his bringing his guns, and having met with success, I think very probably may soon take place. The taking a large force with me will, of course, leave our provinces in a weak and defenceless state; but as it appears the whole of India is at stake, some risk must be made to accomplish this, our principal object. Despondency is of no avail; we must therefore set to work, and retrieve our misfortune as quickly as possible. Here, my dear Lord, I must remark, that whatever may be said upon the subject, you surely cannot be implicated in the business; for all blame ought to fall upon me for detaching the force in the first instance, when I thought I had selected a corps, with an officer to command them, who would have accomplished all my wishes, and obtained the end proposed. This being the case, I certainly became responsible, in the first instance, and shall upon every occasion, both here and at home, declare publicly that you had nothing to do with the march of that detachment, and that all censure for that measure must be attributed to me, and me alone."—LORD LAKE to LORD WELLESLEY, Sept. 24, 1804; *Well. Desp.* iv. 216. These are the principles by which empires are won and saved: here is, on the part of both these great men, the eye of Napoleon and the heart of Henry IV.

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Oct. 8.

Delhi, while the horse engaged the attention of the English troops by endeavouring to cut off their baggage. On the 8th of October the enemy's main force arrived before the imperial city, and summoned the garrison, consisting only of one battalion and a half of sepoys, with a few irregulars, to surrender; while his emissaries used every exertion to excite the native chiefs in the Doab to revolt against their European masters, and with

¹ Wel. Desp. v. 293, 297; iv. 343, 348. such success as seriously embarrassed the operations of the British army, especially in the vital article of obtaining supplies.¹

81.
His repulse
and retreat.
Oct. 10.

For seven days Holkar continued before Delhi, battering its extensive and ruinous walls with the utmost vigour; but such was the resolution of the little garrison under Colonels Ochterlony and Burn, that they not only repulsed repeated assaults, but, sallying forth, carried a battery which was violently shaking the rampart, and spiked the guns. At length the Mahrattas, despairing of storming the city, and intimidated by the approach of Lord Lake with the Bengal army, raised the siege, and retired by slow marches through the hills in the direction

Oct. 15.

of DIEG. The English general had now the fairest prospect of bringing the enemy's whole force to action, with every chance of success; for the prodigious train of artillery which accompanied him rendered his retreat very slow; and ten thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry, including about two thousand five hundred Europeans, followed the British standards. But a total failure of supplies, arising from the disaffection or treachery of the native chiefs, by whom they were to have been furnished, rendered it impossible to continue the pursuit for some days; and during that time Holkar got out of the reach of immediate attack, and, crossing the Jumna with his whole force, proceeded to ravage the country, and stir up resistance to the English beyond that river.² Suddenly recrossing it, however, with his cavalry alone, a few days after, he advanced by forced

Oct. 18.
Oct. 31.
² Lord Lake
to Lord Wel-
lesley, July
1805. Wel.
Desp. v.
293, 297.
Lord Wel.
to Secret
Committee.
Wel. Desp.
iv. 345, 348.

marches to attack Colonel Burn, who, with a detachment, had been sent to Seranhunpore, after the retreat of the enemy from the neighbourhood of Delhi.

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1804.

Lord Lake upon this made a corresponding division of his force. Putting himself at the head of the horse-artillery, two thousand cavalry, and fifteen hundred light-armed infantry, he pursued in person Holkar's horse on the one side of the river; while General Fraser, with eight thousand infantry, a thousand cavalry, and eighteen guns, was intrusted with the task of attacking his foot-soldiers and artillery on the other. That gallant officer, having at length, by great exertions, obtained the requisite supplies, commenced his march from Delhi; and on the 13th November came up with the Mahratta army, consisting of twenty-four battalions of regular infantry, a hundred and sixty pieces of cannon, and three thousand irregular horse—in all above twenty-five thousand men. This formidable force was drawn up with considerable skill, in a strong position, with their left resting on the fortress of DIEG, their right upon a walled village, situated on a height about two miles distant; an extensive morass, altogether impassable, covered the greater part of their front, a large expanse of water protected from attack the whole of their rear; while their immense artillery was so disposed as to rake with concentric fire the narrow isthmus by which alone their line could be assailed.¹

82.
Battle of
Dieg.

Nov. 13.

¹ Monson's
Desp. Nov.
14, 1804,
Wel. Desp.
iv. 233;
Lake's Desp.
v. 298, 301.

Noways daunted by these formidable obstacles, General Fraser resolved to make the attack on the following morning. At daybreak the troops advanced to the charge, headed by the unconquerable 76th, led on by that general in person. They had to make a long circuit round the morass before they reached the point at which it could be passed; during the whole of which they were exposed to a galling cannonade in flank from the enemy's artillery, which, as they approached the isthmus leading to the village, became dreadfully severe. Rushing impetu-

83.
Glorious
victory of
the British.

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1804.

ously on, however, the 76th, followed by the native infantry, ascending the hill, stormed the village with irresistible gallantry. From the village, General Fraser advanced upon the main body of the enemy, who faced about, and were now posted between the morass and the lake, with the fort of Dieg in the rear, and several heights crowned with artillery to defend the approach to it, interspersed in the intervening space. Such, however, was the vigour of the attack led by Fraser and Monson, that, though the enormous batteries of the enemy played with a concentric fire of round, chain, and grape-shot, on the advancing column, it pushed on through the awful tempest, carrying everything before it from right to left of the enemy's original position, and, storming successively all the batteries, drove them at length, in utter confusion, into the fortress of Dieg. Nothing but the heavy fire from its ramparts prevented the whole artillery of the enemy in the field from being captured; as it was, eighty-seven guns and twenty-four tumbrils were taken; two thousand men fell on the field, and great numbers perished in the lake, into which they had fled to avoid the bloody sabres of the English cavalry. The British loss was about seven hundred killed and wounded; among the latter of whom was the brave General Fraser, to whose decision and intrepidity the success was in a great degree owing; while Colonel Monson, the second in command, who succeeded to the direction of the army upon his fall, amply demonstrated, by his bravery, that his former misfortunes had not been owing to any want of heroic courage. Among the guns taken, were, to the inexpressible delight of the soldiers as well as of that brave man, thirteen of those that had been lost in the late calamitous retreat.¹

¹ Monson's
Desp. v.
14, 1804.
Wel. Desp.
iv. 233, 236.
Lord Lake's
Desp. Ibid.
v. 298, 301.

84.

Pursuit of
Holkar to
Furrucka-
bad.

While this important success was gained over the infantry and artillery of Holkar, a triumph equally decisive attended the operations of Lord Lake in person against his cavalry. That enterprising chief having, as

already mentioned, crossed the Jumna with ten thousand horse, made for a ford of the Ganges near Hurdwar, with the design of carrying the war into Rohilcund, and the provinces beyond that river. No sooner, however, did he learn that Lord Lake, with a chosen body of cavalry, was marching against him, than he suddenly changed his course, and, flying down the Doab by forced marches, reached Furruckabad on the evening of the 16th November. Rapid, however, as were the movements of the Mahratta chief, they were exceeded by those of the English general, who, having crossed the Jumna in pursuit on the 1st November, continued to follow his indefatigable adversary with such vigour for the next seventeen days, that he not only effectually prevented him from devastating the country, except in the immediate line of retreat, but kept constantly at the distance of only a single march in his rear. During the whole of this period, both armies marched twenty-three or twenty-four miles daily, even under the burning sun of Hindostan. At length, on the evening of the 16th November, Lord Lake received intelligence that Holkar, after having been repulsed in an attack on Futtehghur, had encamped for the night under the walls of FURRUCKABAD, twenty-nine miles distant. Though the troops had already marched thirty miles on that day, Lord Lake immediately formed the resolution of making a forced march in the night, and surprising the enemy in their camp before daybreak on the following morning.¹

No sooner was the order to move delivered to the troops at nightfall, than all fatigues were forgotten, and, instead of lying down to rest, the men joyfully prepared to resume their march during the darkness of an Indian night. The fires in the enemy's camp, and the accurate information of the guides, conducted them direct to the ground which the Mahrattas occupied. As they approached the camp, the utmost silence was observed in the British columns; the horse-

CHAP.
XLIX.

1804.

Nov. 16.

¹ Lord
Lake's
Desp. Nov.
18, 1804.
Wel. Desp.
iv. 240.

85.
Surprising
night-march
of the Bri-
tish, and
defeat of
Holkar.
Nov. 17.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1804.

artillery only were moved to the front, and advanced slowly and cautiously to within range of their tents. All was buried in sleep in the Mahratta lines ; the watch-fires had almost all burned out, and a few drowsy sentinels alone were watching in the east for the first appearance of dawn. Suddenly the guns opened upon them, and the sleeping army was roused by the rattle of grape-shot falling upon the tents, among the horses, and through the bivouacs. So complete was the surprise, so universal the consternation, that very little resistance was attempted. Before the squadrons could be formed, or the horses in many places unpicketed, the British dragoons were upon them ; and well, in that hour, did the sabres of the 8th, 27th, and 29th, avenge the savage cruelty of Holkar's followers toward the captives in Monson's retreat. The enemy was thrown into irretrievable confusion by this impetuous attack ; and, rushing promiscuously out of the camp, fled in all directions, hotly pursued by the British and native horse. Great numbers were slain in the pursuit, as well as on the field, and still more abandoned their colours, and dispersed, deeming the cause of Holkar hopeless, after so decisive an overthrow. Of the mighty host which had so lately swept like a torrent over Hindostan, a few thousand horse only escaped with their leader across the Jumna, and joined the defeated remains of their infantry within the walls of Dieg. Holkar himself was on the point of falling into the hands of the British dragoons, and owed his escape entirely to the accidental explosion of an ammunition-waggon, which, almost by a miracle, blew his pursuers off their horses, while he himself passed unhurt. Of the victors, the greater part had ridden seventy-three miles during the preceding twenty-four hours, when they took up their ground after the pursuit, besides fighting the whole of Holkar's cavalry ; an achievement far exceeding anything recorded of the boasted celerity of Napoleon's squadrons, and which is probably unparalleled in modern war.¹

¹ Lord
Lake's Desp.
Nov. 18.
1804, and
July 1805.
Wel. Desp.
iv. 240, 244,
and v. 297,
298.

Colonel Monson, whose vigour and bravery in the field were far from being accompanied by a similar degree of capacity and resolution in leading an army, had formed the design of retreating after the victory of Dieg to Muttra for supplies, of which the troops stood much in need, and which were procured with extreme difficulty, owing to the hostile disposition of the inhabitants in the country, and arrived there on the 26th November. But Lord Lake, who at once perceived the prejudicial effect which such a retrograde movement after the battle would have, by giving the enemy a plausible ground to represent it as a defeat, immediately repaired to the spot, and, reinforcing the infantry with his victorious cavalry, again moved forward his whole army, and proceeded in the direction of Dieg, where the broken remains of Holkar's army were now all assembled. On the 4th December, the troops arrived under the walls of that fortress; and operations were commenced against it as soon as the battering-train came up from Agra, which was on the 8th. The siege was prosecuted with the utmost activity, and a breach having been pronounced practicable, the lines around the town were first stormed by the 76th regiment, and on the day following the fortress itself surrendered at discretion. By this important blow, the whole of Holkar's remaining artillery, amounting to eighty pieces, many of them of very heavy calibre, with immense stores of ammunition, were taken; but that formidable chief himself escaped with four thousand horse, and took refuge in BHURTPORE, the Rajah of which, Runjeet Sing, had during the last three months treacherously embraced his cause, and deserted the British alliance.¹

Nothing remained to complete this glorious contest but the reduction of that celebrated fortress; an object now of the highest importance, both on account of the signal treachery of the Rajah, who, on the first reverse, had violated his plighted faith to the Company, by whom he had been loaded with benefits, and of its containing the

CHAP.
XLIX.

1804.

86.

Siege and
capture of
Dieg.

Dec. 1.

Dec. 8.

Dec. 23.

¹ Wel. Desp.
iv. 662, 663.
Lord Wel.
to Secret
Committee,
March 1805,
Wel. Desp.
iv. 362.

87.

Siege and
unsuccessful
assault of
Bhurtpore.

CHAP.
XLIX.

1805.

Jan. 9.

Jan. 21.

Jan. 23.

¹ Lord
Lake's Desp.
Jan. 10, 21,
23, 1805.
Wel. Desp.
iv. 264, 267.

person and last resources of Holkar, who had waged so desperate a contest with the British forces. Thither, accordingly, Lord Lake moved immediately after the fall of Dieg ; and the battering-train having speedily made a breach in the walls, the assault took place on the evening of the 9th January. The water in the ditch proved exceedingly deep, and during the time spent in throwing in fascines, the troops were exposed to a most destructive fire from the rampart on the opposite side. At length, however, they succeeded in passing over ; but all their efforts to gain the summit of the breach proved ineffectual. The wall, which was of tough mud, which could not be broken down by the heavy guns, was imperfectly ruined ; the scaling-ladders were found to be too short ; and, after sustaining a very heavy loss, the troops were compelled to return to their trenches. A second assault, some days afterwards, met with still less success. The brave men reached the edge of the ditch, but it proved to be so broad and deep that all attempts to fill it up were fruitless ; and, after sustaining for above an hour a dreadful fire within pistol-shot from the ramparts, the assaulting column was again obliged to retire. An attempt was soon after made by the whole of Holkar's remaining cavalry, and that of Meer Khan, another noted Mahratta freebooter, to cut off a valuable convoy on its way from Muttra to the British camp. The convoy with its covering force was hard beset by an immense body of cavalry, in a village, when the approach of the 27th light dragoons, and a regiment of native horse, enabled them to sally out and totally rout the assailants. Meer Khan's equipage, with all his arms and a complete suit of armour, fell into the hands of the victors.¹

88.
Repeated
assaults on
Bhurtpore,
which are
repulsed.

The siege was now prosecuted with fresh vigour by the English army, which, being reinforced by a division five thousand strong from Bombay, was raised to twenty thousand men ; while the efforts of the besieged, who were greatly elevated by their former success, were proportion-

ally increased. It was soon discovered that the troops of the Rajah were amongst the bravest and most resolute of Hindostan, comprising, in addition to the remnant of Holkar's followers, the *Jats*, or military caste of Bhurtpore, who yielded to none in Asia the palm of resolution and valour. After a month's additional operations, the breach was deemed sufficiently wide to warrant a third assault, which was made by the 75th and 76th regiments, supported by three sepoy battalions, under Colonel Don; while two other subordinate attacks were made at the same time, one on the enemy's trenches outside the town, and another on the Beem-Narain gate, which it was thought might be carried by escalade. The attack on the trenches proved entirely successful, and they were carried, with all their artillery, by Captain Grant; but the other two sustained a bloody repulse. The scaling-ladders of the party destined to attack the gate were found to be too short, or were destroyed by the terrible discharges of grape which issued from its defences; and, despite all their efforts, the brave 75th and 76th were forced down with dreadful slaughter from the assault. They were ordered out again to the assault, but the troops were so staggered by the frightful scene, that they refused to leave their trenches; and the heroic 12th regiment of sepoys marched past them with loud cheers to the breach.¹

Such was the vigour of their onset, that the brave Indian soldiers reached the summit in spite of every obstacle, and the British colours were seen for a few minutes waving on the bastion; while the 76th, stung with shame, again advanced to the assault. The bastion proved to be separated by a deep ditch from the body of the place, and the guns from the neighbouring ramparts enfiladed the outwork so completely, that the valiant band, after losing half their numbers, were in the end driven down the breach, weeping with generous indignation at seeing the prize of their heroic valour thus torn from them. The attempt was renewed on the following day with no better success.

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Feb. 20.

¹ See ante, chap. xlvii. § 30. Lord Lake's Desp. Feb. 21, 1805. Wel. Desp. iv. 292, 293.

89.
Final defeat of the British.

Feb. 21.

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The whole of the European infantry in the army, about two thousand five hundred strong, with three battalions of native infantry, were employed in the assault, under the command of Colonel Monson. Such, however, was the height and difficulty of the breach, and such the resolute resistance opposed by the enemy, that all their efforts proved unsuccessful. A small number only could mount abreast, from the narrowness of the ruined part of the wall; and, as they pushed up, they were crushed under logs of wood, or torn in pieces by combustibles thrown among them by the besieged: while the few who reached the top, swept off by discharges of grape, which poured in by a cross-fire from either side, perished miserably. After two hours employed in this murderous and fruitless contest, in which prodigies of valour were performed on both sides, the troops were drawn off; and, after six weeks of open trenches, and four desperate assaults, which cost above three thousand brave men, the native colours still waved on the walls of Bhurt-pore.¹

¹ Lord Lake's Desp. Feb. 21, 22, 1805. Wel. Desp. iv. 292, 295.

90.
Reasons on both sides for an accommodation with the Rajah of Bhurt-pore.

Although, however, the British troops had, at the close of their long career of victory, met with this unexpected check, yet many reasons concurred to recommend submission to the hitherto unsubdued Rajah. His territory was wholly occupied by the enemy; his resources were cut off; his stores and magazines rapidly diminishing; and, even if he should be so fortunate as to withstand a repetition of the furious assaults from which he had so recently and narrowly escaped, he was well aware that, by the slower but more certain process of blockade and famine, he would in the end inevitably be reduced. On the other hand, various considerations, equally forcible, concurred in counselling an accommodation with the perfidious Rajah to the English government. Though Scindiah had, in the outset of the negotiation, consented to the cession of Gwalior and Gohud, with the adjacent territory, to the Company, and even signed a treaty in which they were formally ceded to them, yet he had never been reconciled

Feb. 24.

to the loss of the former important fortress; and, from the first moment that hostilities commenced with Holkar, it became evident that he was waiting only for a favourable moment to come to an open rupture with the English, or take advantage of their difficulties to obtain its restitution. Troops under his banner had openly attacked the escort of the treasure in Colonel Monson's retreat; the language of his court had been so menacing, the conduct of his government so suspicious, that not only had a long and angry negotiation taken place with the acting Resident, but General Wellesley had been directed to move the subsidiary force in the Deccan, eight thousand strong, to the frontier of Scindiah's territories. The prince himself, who was weak and sensual, had fallen entirely under the government of his minister and father-in-law, Surajee Row Ghautka, a man of the most profligate character, who was indefatigable in his endeavours to embroil his master with the British government. Under the influence of these violent counsels, matters were fast approaching a crisis. The cession of Gwalior was openly required, with menaces of joining the enemy if the demand were not acceded to; and at length he announced a determination to interfere as an armed mediator between Holkar and the English, and moved a large force to the neighbourhood of Bhurtpore to support his demands during its long-protracted siege. The conduct of the Rajah of Berar had also become extremely questionable; hostilities, evidently excited by him, had already taken place in the Cuttack and Bundelcund: and symptoms began openly to appear in all quarters, of that general disposition to throw off the British authority, which naturally arose from the exaggerated reports which had been spread of Holkar's successes.¹

¹ Lord Wel.
to Secret
Committee,
March 1805.
Wel. Desp.
iv. 364, 486.
Do. to do.,
May 1805,
v. 190, 198.

Under the influence of these concurring motives, on both sides, there was little difficulty in coming to an accommodation with the Rajah of Bhurtpore. The English government became sensible of the expediency of

91.
Peace with
the Rajah
of Bhurtpore.

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1805.

April 17.

May 2.

¹ Lord Wel.
to Secret
Committee,
May 1805.
Wel. Desp.
v. 149, 151,
198, 199.

abandoning their declared intention of punishing him by the total loss of his dominions for his unpardonable defection, and limiting their resentment to the reduction of his military power and ability to do further mischief; while he saw the necessity of abandoning the alliance of Holkar, and expelling him from his dominions. The terms ultimately agreed to, at the earnest suit of the enemy, were, that the Rajah should pay twenty lacs of rupees, by instalments, in four years; that he should never hold any correspondence with the enemies of the British power, whether in Europe or Asia; and that, as a security for the faithful performance of these conditions, he should forthwith surrender one of his sons as a hostage, make over the fortress of Dieg to the British troops, submit any difference he might have with any other power to their arbitration, and obtain from them a guarantee for his remaining possessions. These conditions appeared to the governor-general and council to be honourable to the British arms, and to provide for the main object of the present contest, viz., the separation of the Rajah of Bhurtpore from Holkar's interests, and the severing of the latter chieftain from the resources which his fortresses and treasures afforded. The treaty was, therefore, ratified by the governor-general; and on the day on which it was signed, the Rajah's son arrived in the British camp, and Holkar was compelled to leave Bhurtpore.¹

92.

Holkar joins
Scindiah,
being ex-
pelled from
Bhurtpore.

As the forces of this once formidable chieftain were now reduced to three or four thousand horse, without either stores or guns, and his possessions in every part of India had been occupied by the British troops, he had no alternative but to throw himself upon the protection of his ancient enemy, Scindiah, who had recently, under his father-in-law's counsels, appeared as an armed mediator in his favour. He accordingly joined Scindiah's camp with his remaining followers immediately after his expulsion from Bhurtpore. The Mahratta horse had previously reassembled in small bodies in the vicinity of that town,

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in consequence of the absence of the great bulk of the British cavalry, which had been detached from the grand army to stop the incursion of Meer Khan, who had broken into the Doab, and was committing great devastations. On the 1st April, Lord Lake, having received intelligence that a considerable body of the enemy had assembled in a position about sixty miles from Bhurtpore, made a forced march to surprise them in their camp; and he was so fortunate as to come up with, utterly rout, and disperse them with the loss of a thousand slain, and return to his camp the same day, after a march in twelve hours of fifty miles. A few days after, four thousand of the enemy, with a few guns, were attacked by Captain Royle, in a strong position under the walls of Adaultnaghur, and totally defeated, with the loss of their artillery and baggage. By these repeated defeats, the whole of this formidable predatory cavalry was dispersed or destroyed, with the exception of the small body which accompanied Holkar into Scindiah's camp.¹

April 1.

April 8.

¹ Lord Wel.
to Secret
Committee,
May 13,
1805, v.
155, 159.

Nor had the incursion of Meer Khan into Rohilcund and the Doab, or the detached efforts of the Mahrattas in other quarters, been more successful. The Rajahs of Khoordah and Kunkha, in the Cuttack, instigated by the Rajah of Berar, made an incursion into the British dominions; but they were repulsed, pursued into their own territories, and Khoordah carried by assault, by a force under the command of Colonel Harcourt. Bundelcund was for some weeks agitated by the intrigues of Scindiah, who secretly instigated its chiefs to revolt, in order to give more weight to his armed intervention in favour of Holkar; but though this movement, in the outset, had some success, in consequence of the absence of the British cavalry at the siege of Bhurtpore, yet it was of short duration. The approach of a considerable British force speedily reduced them to submission. More difficulty was experienced from the incursion of Meer Khan,

93.
Operations
in the Cut-
tack, Bun-
delcund, and
against Meer
Khan.

Jan. and
Feb. 1805.

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1805.

Feb. 15.

Feb. 18.

March 2.

March 10.

¹ Lord Wel.
to Secret
Committee,
March 1805.
Wel. Desp.
v. 142, 155.

who broke into Rohilcund at the head of fifteen thousand horse ; and in the middle of February occupied its capital, Moradabad. Three regiments of British, and three of native horse, were immediately despatched by Lord Lake, from the grand army before Bhurtpore, and marched with extraordinary expedition to arrest the enemy. They arrived in time to rescue a little garrison of three hundred sepoys, which still held good the house of Mr Leycester, the collector for the district, and compelled the enemy to retire. Meer Khan fled to the hills, closely pursued by the British horse under General Smith, who, after a variety of painful marches, came up with the enemy in the beginning of March, and completely destroyed the flower of his army : and, on the 10th of the same month, they sustained a second defeat from Colonel Burn, at the head of thirteen hundred irregular horse, and lost all their baggage. Disheartened by these disasters, and finding no disposition to join him, as he had expected, in the inhabitants of Rohilcund, Meer Khan retired across the Ganges by the same ford by which he had crossed it, and after traversing the Doab, repassed the Jumna in the end of March, having, in the course of his expedition, lost half his forces.¹

94
Operations
against
Scindiah,
who sues
for peace.
And Lord
Wellesley
returns to
England.

No sooner was the treaty with the Rajah of Bhurt-pore signed, than Lord Lake marched with his whole force to watch Scindiah's movements, whom Holkar had joined, and effected a junction with the detachment under the command of Colonel Martindell. This wily rajah, finding the whole weight of the contest likely to fall upon him, and that he derived no solid support from Holkar's force, immediately retired from his advanced position, and expressed an anxious and now sincere desire for an accommodation. A long negotiation ensued, in the outset of which the demands of the haughty chief-tain were so extravagant as to be utterly inadmissible ; and Lord Wellesley bequeathed it as his last advice to the East India Directors and Board of Control, to make

no peace with him, or any of the Mahratta chiefs, but on such terms as might maintain the power and reputation of the British government, and deprive them of the means of continuing the system of plunder and devastation by which their confederacy had hitherto been upheld;* and Lord Cornwallis, his successor, having arrived, this great statesman was relieved from the cares of sovereignty, and embarked at Calcutta on his return to England, amidst the deep regrets of all classes of the people, leaving a name imperishable in the rolls alike of European and Asiatic fame.^{1†}

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July 30.
Aug. 21.

¹ Lord Wel.
to Secret
Committee,
July 1805,
v. 269, 270.

These principles, however, were not equally impressed by personal experience upon his successors. The East India Company and the Board of Control—the former intent only on the price of their stock, and the prospect of augmenting their dividends; the latter far removed from the scene of action, mainly solicitous about the husbanding of the national resources for the desperate contest with Napoleon in Europe, and unaware that a similar necessity existed to uphold the British supremacy in the East—had concurred in directing the succeeding governor-general to use his utmost efforts to bring the costly and distressing contest with the Mahratta powers to an early termination. Lord Cornwallis, however, did not live to carry these instructions into effect. The health of this distinguished nobleman, which had been declining before he left England, rapidly sank under the heat and labours of India; and he expired at Benares on the 5th

95.
Second ad-
ministra-
tion, and
death of
Lord Corn-
wallis. Ar-
rival of Sir
G. Barlow.

* “Adverting to the restless disposition and predatory habits of Holkar, it is not probable that he will be induced to consent to any arrangement which shall deprive him of the means of ranging the territories of Hindostan at the head of a body of plunderers, except only in the last extremity of ruined fortune. Whatever might be the expedience, under other circumstances than those which at present exist, of offering to Holkar terms of accommodation, without previous submission and solicitation on his part, at present the offer of terms such as Holkar would accept would be manifestly injurious to the reputation, and ultimately hazardous to the security of the British government.”
—LORD WELLESLEY to Secret Committee, 25th June 1805—*Well. Desp.* v. 269, 270.

† As the author is now to bid a final adieu to Marquis Wellesley’s administration in the East, he trusts he will not be accused of unbecoming feeling, but

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1805.

Nov. 23.

Jan. 7,
1806.

October, without having brought the negotiations to a termination. They were resumed in the same pacific spirit by his successor, Sir George Barlow : treaties were in November concluded with Scindiah, and with Holkar in the beginning of January. These treaties were indeed honourable to the British arms ; they provided an effectual barrier against the Mahratta invasions, and secured the peace of India for twelve years. But Lord Wellesley's principles proved in the end to be well founded. Pacific habits were found to be inconsistent with even a nominal independence on the part of these restless chieftains ; conciliation impossible, with men who had been inured to rapine by centuries of violence. The necessity of thorough subjugation was at last experienced ; and it was then accomplished in the most effectual manner. It was reserved for the nobleman who had been most fierce in his invectives against Lord Cornwallis's first war with Tippoo, to complete the conquest of the Mahratta powers ; for a companion in arms of Wellington to plant the British standard on the walls of Bhurtpore.¹*

¹ Malcolm,
388, 427.
Auber, ii.
361, 461.

96.
Terms of
peace with
Scindiah
and Hol-
kar.

The principal articles in the pacification with Scindiah were, that all the conditions of the former treaty, except in so far as expressly altered, were to continue in full force ; that the claim of the Company to Gwalior and Gohud should be abandoned by the British government, and the river Chumbul form the boundary of the two states, from Kotah on the west to Gohud on the east ; and that Scindiah was to relinquish all claim to the

rather of a regard for historic truth, when he quotes, in corroboration of the facts stated in the preceding chapters, the following passage in a letter with which, after perusing this work, that great man honoured him :—" Lord Wellesley had not the interview with Fouché of which you speak, [this is now corrected.] But in all other respects he is ready to bear full testimony to the accuracy of your history, and to the impartial and beautiful spirit in which it is conceived and written."—MARQUIS WELLESLEY to MR ALISON, 20th Nov. 1840. —The imprimatur of such a man is indeed a testimony in relation to his own transactions, of which a historian may justly feel proud, the more especially as he had not the happiness of enjoying his private acquaintance.

* Lord Hastings, who subdued the Mahrattas in 1817 ; and Lord Combermere, who took Bhurtpore in 1825.

countries to the northward of that river, and the British to the south. Various money payments, undertaken by the Company in the former treaty, were by this one remitted; and the British agreed not to restore to Holkar any of his possessions in the province of Malwa. Holkar, driven to the banks of the Hyphasis, and in extreme distress, sent to sue for peace, which was granted to him on the following conditions:—That he should renounce all right to the districts of Rampoorra and Boondce, on the north of the Chumbul, as well as Koonah and Bundelcund; that he was to entertain no European in his employment without the consent of the British government, and never to admit Surajee Ghautka into his counsels or service. Contrary to the earnest advice of Lord Lake, Sir George Barlow, the new governor-general, so far gratuitously modified these conditions, to which the Mahratta chiefs had consented, as to restore the provinces of Rampoorra and Boondce to Holkar, and to abandon the defensive alliance which had been concluded with the Rajah of Jypore. This last measure was not adopted without the warmest remonstrances on the part both of Lord Lake and the abandoned rajah, who observed to the British resident with truth, “That this was the first time, since the English government had been established in India, that it had been known to make its faith subservient to its convenience.” But everything announced that the master-spirit had fled from the helm, when Lord Wellesley embarked for England. Advantages conceded by our enemies were gratuitously abandoned in the vain idea of conciliation; and, in the illusory hope of advantages to be gained by an undecided policy, a treaty was signed, to which the illustrious statesman, who had conquered the means of dictating it, would never have consented; and future burdensome and hazardous wars were entailed upon the empire to avoid the necessity of a suitable assertion of the British supremacy at the present moment.¹

¹ Malcolm,
416, 439.
Auber, ii.
395, 409.

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97.

Review of
Lord Wel-
lesley's ad-
ministra-
tion.

The administration of Marquis Wellesley exceeds, in the brilliancy and importance of the events by which it was distinguished, any recorded in British history. In the space of seven years, triumphs were then accumulated which would have given lustre to an ordinary century of success. Within that short period, a formidable French force, fourteen thousand strong, which had wellnigh subverted the British influence at the court of their ancient ally the Nizam, was disarmed; the empire of Tippoo Sultaun, which had so often brought it to the brink of ruin, was subverted; the Peishwa restored to his hereditary rank in the Mahratta confederacy, and secured to the British interests; the power of Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar crushed, and their thrones preserved only by the magnanimity of the conquerors; the vast force, organised by French officers, of forty thousand disciplined soldiers on the banks of the Jumna, totally destroyed; and Holkar himself, with the last remnant of the Mahratta horse, driven entirely from his dominions, and compelled, a needy suppliant, to sue for peace, and owe the restitution of his provinces to the perhaps misplaced generosity of the conqueror. He added provinces to the British empire in India, during his short administration, larger than the kingdom of France, extended its influence over territories more extensive than the whole of Germany; and successively vanquished four fierce and warlike nations, who could bring three hundred thousand men, of whom two-thirds were horse, into the field. Nor was it only in military and diplomatic transactions that the administration of Marquis Wellesley was distinguished; his powerful mind was equally directed to objects of domestic utility and social amelioration. He founded the college of Calcutta, from which Haileybury College, so well known for its beneficial influence, afterwards sprang, and took the warmest interest in that institution, as well as all others calculated to elevate the intellectual character of the Hindoos, or improve the character of their governors.

And he early directed the attention of the Company to the importance of encouraging the cultivation of cotton—an object which has since that time been unaccountably neglected, both by the East India Company and the British government, but which, if duly attended to, might by this time have rendered us independent of all the world for the material of our staple manufacture, and saved the tribute of *fifteen millions sterling* which is annually paid by this country to the industry of the United States.^{1*}

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¹ Pearce's
Life of
Wellesley,
i. 392; and
ii. 187, 192,
214.

From maintaining with difficulty a precarious footing at the foot of the Ghauts, on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, the British government was seated on the throne of Mysore; from resting only on the banks of the Ganges, it had come to spread its influence to the Indus and the Himalaya: it numbered among its provincial towns Delhi and Agra, the once splendid capitals of Hindostan; among its stipendiary princes, the Sultaun of Mysore and the descendant of the imperial house of Timour. These great successes were gained by an empire which never had twenty thousand European soldiers under its banners; which was engaged at home, at the moment, in a mortal conflict with the conqueror of the greatest Continental states; and which found in its fidelity to its engagements, the justice of its rule, the integrity of its servants, its constancy in difficulty, its magnanimity in

98.

Vast extension he gave to the British empire in the East.

* "The civil servants of the East India Company can no longer be considered as the agents of a commercial concern. They are, in fact, the ministers and officers of a powerful sovereign. They must now be viewed in that capacity, with reference not to their nominal, but their real avocations. They are required to discharge the duties of magistrates, judges, ambassadors, and governors of provinces, in all the complicated and extensive relations of those sacred trusts and exalted stations, and under peculiar circumstances which greatly enhance the solemnity of every public obligation, and aggravate the difficulty of every public charge. Their studies, the discipline of their education, their habits of life, their manners and morals, should therefore be so ordered and regulated as to establish a just conformity between their personal consideration and the dignity and importance of their public stations, and to maintain a sufficient correspondence between their qualifications and their duties."—*Memorial by LORD WELLESLEY, 10th July 1800*—PEARCE'S *Life of Wellesley*, ii. 187.

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disaster, the means of rousing the native population in its behalf, and compensating the want of British soldiers by the justice of British government, the ability of British councils, and the daring of British officers. Impressed with these ideas, future ages will dwell on this epoch as one of the most glorious in British, one of the most marvellous in European annals; and deem the last words of the British inhabitants of Calcutta to Lord Wellesley, on his departure for Europe, as not the florid language of panegyric, but the sober expressions of truth:—"The events of the last seven years have marked the period of your government as the most important epoch in the history of European power in India. Your discernment in seeing the exigencies of the country and of the times in which you were called upon to act; the promptitude and determination with which you have seized upon the opportunities of acting; your just conception and masterly use of our intrinsic strength, have eminently contributed, in conjunction with the zeal, the discipline, and the courage of our armies, to decide upon these great events, and to establish from one extremity of this empire to the other the ascendancy of the British name and dominion."¹

¹ Address of inhabitants of Calcutta to Lord Wellesley, July 29, 1805. Wel. Desp. iv. 613.

99.
Return of Wellington to Europe. March 10, 1805.

General Wellesley had, a few months before his brother, set sail for the British islands. His important duties as governor of Mysore had prevented him from taking an active part in the war with Holkar; although the judicious distribution of troops which he had made in the Deccan had secured the protection of the British provinces in that quarter, and contributed powerfully to overawe the southern Mahratta powers, and keep Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar from breaking out into open hostility. But, though not personally engaged, his active and watchful spirit observed with intense interest the progress of the contest; his council and experience proved of essential service both to the government and the armies; and his letters on the subject remain to this day an enduring monument of judgment, foresight, and penetra-

tion.¹ His able and impartial government of Mysore, and the tributary and allied states connected with it, had endeared him to the native inhabitants ; while his extensive local knowledge, and indefatigable activity in civil administration, had justly commanded the admiration of all ranks of European functionaries. But he was dissatisfied with the restrictions sometimes imposed upon him by the government at home ; and, prompted to return to Europe by that hidden law which so often makes the temporary vexations of men, selected by Providence for special purposes, the means of turning them into their appointed path, he felt the influence of that mysterious yearning which, even in the midst of honours and power, prompts the destined actors in great events to pant for higher glories, and desire the trial of more formidable dangers. Addresses showered upon him from all quarters when his approaching departure was known ; the inhabitants of Calcutta voted him a splendid sword, and erected a monument in their capital commemorative of the battle of Assaye ; but among all his honours none was more touching than the parting address of the native inhabitants of Seringapatam, which seemed almost inspired with a prophetic spirit. They “implored the God of all castes and of all nations to hear their constant prayer ; and wherever greater affairs than the government of them might call him, to bestow on him health, happiness, and glory.”¹

It is observed by Arrian, that, after the return of Alexander the Great from his Indian expedition, “he laid down a general system for the blending together of his Eastern and European dominions. For this purpose he took care to incorporate in his Eastern armies the Greeks and Macedonians. In each company, or rather in each division of sixteen, *he joined four Europeans to twelve Asiatics*. In the Macedonian squadrons and battalions, on the other hand, he intermixed such of the Asiatics as were most distinguished by their strength, their activity,

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¹ Gurw. ii.
457, 607.

¹ Gurw. ii.
606, 608.
Scherer, i.
66.

100.
Proportion
of Europe-
ans to Asia-
tics in the
armies of
Alexander
the Great.

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¹ Arrian,
lib. vii. p.
158. See
also Gillies,
Greece, iv.
373.

and their merit. The Asiatic youth delighted in the Grecian exercise and discipline, and rejoiced at being associated with the glory of their victors. Their improvement in arts and arms fully answered his expectation and rewarded his foresight.”¹ It is one of the most interesting facts recorded in history, to find experience, at an interval of two thousand years, suggesting exactly the same proportion between Europeans and their Asiatic auxiliaries, to conquerors under so surprising a diversity of external circumstances.* The lapse of time makes a vast difference in the arms by which men combat each other, and the nations which in their turn appear as the dominant race on the great theatre of human affairs. Had Alexander’s followers been told that a nation of conquerors was to succeed them in the Indian plains, issuing from an obscure and then unknown island in the West, combating with weapons resembling the artillery of heaven, and who had circumnavigated the dreaded African promontories, while their descendants were groaning under an Eastern yoke, they would have deemed the story too incredible for belief. But that lapse of time makes none in the fundamental qualities of the different races of mankind. Amidst all these marvellous changes, the pristine character of the children of Japhet and the descendants of Shem has remained unchanged: the superiority of the West over the East in the essential qualities which lead to social and military advancement, has continued the same; and the very proportion of Europeans to Asiatics in the composition of a united army, which experience suggested to Alexander after his victory over Porus in the Punjaub, was impressed upon Lake on achieving the triumphs of Delhi and Agra. Nay, more marvellous still, the ultimate and decisive victory gained by the English over the Sikhs in the Punjaub itself, *on the very theatre of Alexan-*

* See *ante*, Chap. XLIX. §§ 52, 54, notes, where Lord Lake suggests, the day after the battles of Delhi and Agra, this very proportion of one European to three Asiatics, which was the rule in Alexander’s united armies.

der's contest with Porus—the triumphs of Sobraon and Goojerat—were gained entirely by the infusion of that very proportion of native British among the Asiatic troops.*

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Experience has since abundantly confirmed the justice of the principles of these great men. The disasters of Monson's retreat, the first unsuccessful Goorkah invasion, the protracted contest amidst the jungles of Arracan, the two undecided campaigns against China, the unparalleled disaster of the Coord-Cabul Pass, were all mainly owing to the fatal oblivion, in the pride of continued victory, or to the not less fatal neglect, from the prevalence of a false system of economy, of the great truth which experience had impressed upon Alexander and Lake. On the other hand, all these reverses were repaired when misfortune had tamed this pride or overruled this economy; and necessity, though then at an enormous expense, brought the European troops in a fair proportion to Asiatics into the field.† It is not going too far to say, that on the due observance, at whatever cost, of Alexander's and Lake's proportion of one European to three or four Asiatics, the existence of our Indian empire depends. Nor need the cost of such an augmentation of the native British forces deter a prudent and paternal government. The wisest economy is that which averts calamity by foresight: no expenses are so ruinous as those which, incurred in a moment of consternation, fall with tenfold severity on the unprepared. Let justice and equity distinguish our Eastern rule: let the vast markets of England be freely opened to Indian industry: let British capital and enterprise restore the long-neglected canals of Hindostan, and British energy repress the predatory habits of its native

101.
Subsequent
confirmation
of the
same prin-
ciples.

* At the battles of Aliwal, Sobraon, and Goojerat in the Punjaub in 1847 and 1849, the proportion of English to Asiatic troops engaged was about one to three.

† Previous to the campaign which terminated so gloriously under the walls of Nankin in 1842, the native British military and naval forces were tripled, and the former were doubled before the last triumphant march to Cabul.

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powers ; in a word, let us treat India as a distant province of our own island, and exact nothing from its inhabitants for which we do not give a full equivalent, and there will be no difficulty in maintaining the fidelity of our native armies, the loyalty of our native subjects ; and sixty thousand native British, joined to a hundred and eighty thousand Hindoo troops, will secure to us the permanent empire of the East.

102.
Analogy
between
the British
empire in
India, and
Napoleon's
in Europe.

The progress of the British empire in India bears, in many respects, a close resemblance to that of Napoleon in Europe ; and the "necessity of conquest to existence," which was so strongly felt and forcibly expressed by Lord Clive, Lord Cornwallis, Lord Wellesley, and Lord Hastings, should make us view with a charitable eye the corresponding invincible impulse under which the European conqueror continually acted. Both empires were founded on opinion, and supported by military force ; both brought a race of conquerors to supreme dominion, in opposition to the established rights and vested interests of the higher classes ; both had to contend with physical force superior to their own, and prevailed chiefly by espousing the cause of one part of the native powers against the other ; both were compelled at first to supply inferiority of numbers by superiority in energy and rapidity of movement ; both felt that the charm of invincibility once broken was for ever lost, and that the first step in serious retreat was the commencement of ruin. Both had gained their chief increase of power during periods of peace ; the strength of both appeared more terrible on the first renewal of hostilities than it had been when they last terminated ; and it is hard to say whether the open hostility or withering alliance of either was most fatal to the independence of the adjoining states.

But while, in these respects, these two empires were remarkably analogous to each other, in one vital particular their principles of action and rules of administration

were directly at variance; and it is to this difference that the different duration of their existence is to be ascribed. The French in Europe conquered only to oppress. Seducing words, indeed, preceded their approach, but cruel exactions accompanied their footsteps, desolation and suffering followed their columns; the vanquished states experienced only increased severity of rule under the sway of the tricolor flag. The English in India, on the contrary, conquered, but this led, perhaps unintentionally on their part, to blessings. The oppression of Asiatic rule, the ferocity of authorised plunder, disappeared before their banners; multitudes flocked from the adjoining states to enjoy the security of their protection; the advance of their frontier was marked by the smiling aspect of villages rebuilt, fields recultivated, the jungle and the forest receding before human improvement. And the difference in the practical result of the two governments has been decisively established, by the difference of the strength which they have exhibited in resisting the shocks of adverse fortune. For while the empire of Napoleon sank as rapidly as it rose, and was prostrated on the first serious reverse before the aroused indignation of mankind, the British dominion in Asia, like the Roman in Europe, has stood secure in the affections of its innumerable inhabitants, and, though separated by half the globe from the parent state, has risen superior during almost a century to the accumulated force of all its enemies.

After the most attentive consideration of the circumstances attending the rise and establishment of this extraordinary dominion, under Lord Clive, Warren Hastings, Lord Cornwallis, and Marquis Wellesley, it seems almost inexplicable to what cause its marvellous progress has been owing. It was not to the magnitude of the forces sent out by the mother country, for they were few, and furnished in the most parsimonious spirit; it was not to the weakness of the conquered states, for they were vast

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103.

Their essential point of difference.

104.
Reflections on the rise of the British power in India.

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and opulent empires, wellnigh equalling in numbers and resources all those of Europe put together ; it was not to their want of courage or discipline, for they had all the resources of European military art, and fought with a courage which sometimes rivalled even the far-famed prowess of British soldiers. The means of combating with resources at first slender, and always dependent for their existence on the capacity and energy of the Indian government, were found in the moral courage and far-seeing sagacity of our Eastern administration ; in the incorruptible integrity and public spirit of its officers, both civil and military ; in the undaunted courage of the small band of native English, and the unconquerable valour of our British officers, who brought an inferior race into the field, and taught them, by their spirit and example, to emulate the heroic deeds of their European brethren in arms. The history of the world can hardly exhibit a parallel to the vigour and intrepidity of that political administration, the courage and daring of those military exploits. And perhaps, on reviewing their achievements, the British, like the Roman annalist, may be induced to conclude that it is to the extraordinary virtue and talent of a few leading men that these wonderful successes have been owing :—“ *Mihi multa legenti, multa audienti, quæ populus Romanus domi militiæque, mari atque terrâ, præclara facinora fecit, forte lubuit attendere, quæ res maxime tanta negotia sustinuisset. Sciebam, sæpenumero parvâ manu cum magnis legionibus hostium contendisse ; cognoveram, parvis copiis bella gesta cum opulentis regibus ; ad hoc sæpe fortunæ violentiam tolerasse ; facundia Græcis, gloria belli Gallis, ante Romanos fuisse. Ac mihi, multa agitant, constabat paucorum civium egregiam virtutem cuncta patravisse ; eoque factum, ut divitias paupertas, multitudinem paucitas superaret.*”¹ *

¹ Sall. Bel.
Cat. sec. 53.

* “ After reading and hearing much of what the Roman people at home and abroad, by land and sea, had achieved of glorious deeds, the question occurred, What has produced such wonderful results ? I know that often, with slender power, they had contended with vast armies, with inconsiderable resources

Much, however, as the strenuous virtue of individuals may have contributed to the greatness of the British empire in Asia, as it did of the Roman dominion in Europe, it will not of itself explain the phenomenon. This strenuous virtue itself is the wonder which requires solution. How did it happen that Great Britain, during the course of eighty years, should have been able to furnish a race of statesmen adequate to the conception of such mighty projects ; of warriors equal to the execution of such glorious deeds ; men capable of seizing with unflinching courage the moment of action, of combining with profound sagacity the means of conquest, of executing with undaunted resolution the directions of genius ? Still more, how was this constellation of talent exhibited when the state was involved in bloody and arduous conflicts in the western hemisphere ; and how did it shine with the brightest lustre at the very moment when all its resources seemed concentrated for the defence of the heart of the empire ? It was the boast of the Romans that their republican constitution, by training all the citizens to civil or military duties, either as leaders or followers, provided an inexhaustible fund of virtue and ability for the service of the commonwealth ; and that the loss even of the largest army or the most skilful commanders could without difficulty be supplied by the multitudes in every rank whom the avocations of freedom had trained to every pacific or warlike duty. Yet even the ancient Romans made it a fundamental rule of their policy never to engage in two serious wars at the same time ; whereas the British empire in India has shone forth with most splendour when the parent state was engaged in vast foreign contests, which embraced the whole world in their operations. It

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105.

Causes of
this extra-
ordinary
progress.

waged war with opulent monarchs ; that they had often felt the mutations of war ; that they were inferior to the Greeks in eloquence, to the Gauls in the passion for military glory. And after weighing everything, I have arrived at the conclusion, that *the extraordinary energy of a few citizens* worked all these wonders, and that thence it was that poverty conquered riches, the few the many."—SALLUST, *Bell. Cat.* § 53.

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first rose to greatness under the guidance of Clive, in the midst of the Seven Years' War in Europe; it was preserved by Hastings during the darkest season of the American conflict; it was elevated to the highest point by Wellesley, in the heat of the struggle for life and death with Napoleon. In British India, equally as in ancient Rome, the influence of the undying energy and widespread capacity springing from free institutions may be described. The natives say that the Company has always conquered because it was "*always young*;" and such in truth has ever been its character. In no other state of society but that in which a large mixture of the democratic element has spread vigour and the spirit of exertion through every rank, is to be found, for so considerable a period, so large a share of the undecaying youth of the human race.

106.

It was owing to the union of democratic energy with aristocratic foresight.

But this element has usually been found in human affairs to be inconsistent with durable greatness. It has either burned with such fierceness as to consume in a few years the vitals of the state, or dwindled into a selfish or short-sighted passion for economy, to gratify the jealousy of the middle classes of society, fatal in the end to its independence. In moments of general excitement, and when danger was obvious to the senses, democratic societies have often been capable of the most extraordinary exertion; it is in previous preparation, sagacious foresight, and the power of present self-denial for future good, that they have invariably, in the long run, proved deficient. That England, in its European administration, has experienced, throughout the contest with revolutionary France, its full share both of the strength and weakness incident to democratic societies, is evident from the consideration, that if the unforeseeing economy of the Commons had not, during the preceding peace, when danger was remote, reduced the national strength to a pitiable degree of weakness, Paris could with ease have been taken in the first campaign; and that if the inherent energy

of democratic vigour, when danger was present, had not supported the country during its later stages, the independence of Britain and the last remnant of European freedom, notwithstanding all the efforts of the aristocracy, must have sunk beneath the arms of Napoleon. No one can doubt, that if a popular House of Commons or unbridled press had existed at Calcutta and Madras, to coerce or restrain the Indian government in its political energy or military establishment, as was the case in the British Isles, the British empire in the East must have been speedily prostrated. And it is equally clear that, if its able councils and gallant armies had not been supported by popular vigour at home, even the energy of Lord Wellesley and the daring of Lord Lake must alike have sunk before the strength of the Asiatic dynasties.

The Eastern empire of England, however, has exhibited no such vicissitudes. It has never felt the want either of aristocratic foresight in preparation, or of democratic vigour in execution; it has ever been distinguished alike by the resolution in council and tenacity of purpose which characterise patrician, and the energy in action and inexhaustible resources which are produced in plebeian governments. This extraordinary combination, peculiar, in the whole history of the species, to the British empire in Asia and the Roman in Europe, is evidently owing to the causes which in both, during a brief period, rendered aristocratic direction of affairs coexistent with democratic execution of its purposes; a state of things so unusual, and threatened by so many dangers—an equilibrium so unstable, that its continuance, even for the brief time it endured in both, is perhaps to be ascribed only to special divine interposition. And it is evident, that if the same combination had existed, in uncontrolled operation, in the government at home; if the unconquerable popular energy of England had been permanently directed by foresight and resolution equal to

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108.
Causes of
this extra-
ordinary
combina-
tion.

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that which was displayed in the East; if no popular jealousy or impatience had existed, to extinguish, on the termination of war, the force which had gained its triumphs—if the fleets and armies of Blake and Marlborough, Nelson and Wellington, had been suffered to remain at the disposal of a vigilant executive, to perpetuate the ascendancy they had acquired; if the two hundred ships of the line, and three hundred thousand warriors, once belonging to England, had been permanently directed by the energetic foresight of a Chatham, a Burke, or a Wellesley, to external purposes, the British European empire, in modern, must have proved as irresistible as the Roman did in ancient times, and the emulation of independent states been extinguished in the slumber of universal dominion.

109.
Causes
which will
eventually
subvert our
Eastern
empire.

But no such gigantic empire was intended by Providence to lull the ardent spirit of Europe, till it had performed its destined work of spreading the seeds of civilisation and religion through the globe. To Great Britain, a durable colonial ascendancy is given; but it will be found, not among the sable inhabitants of Hindostan, but among the free descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race in the American and Australian wilds. The extraordinary combination of circumstances which gave us the empire of the East, could not remain permanent: aristocratic constancy and democratic vigour can coexist only for a brief space, even in the most favoured nation. Already the great organic change of 1832, and the extension of the direct influence of British popular power upon Eastern administration, have gone far to shake the splendid fabric. When the time arrives, as arrive it will, that adverse interests, ignorant philanthropy, or prejudiced feeling, in the dominant island, shall interfere with vested rights, violate existing engagements, or force on premature changes, in the East, as they have already done in the West Indies, the discontent of the inhabitants will break out into inextinguishable revolt. When, to gratify the

jealousy of popular ascendancy, the military and naval strength of the state is prostrated in the Asiatic, as it has already been in the European world, the last hour of our Indian empire has struck. Distant provinces may be long ruled by a wise, vigorous, and paternal central government; but they cannot remain for any considerable time under the sway of a remote and self-interested democratic society. The interests of the masses are, in such a case, directly brought into collision: the prejudices, the passions of the ruling multitude, soon prove insupportable to the inhabitants of the subject realm; the very spirit which the central empire has generated, becomes the expansive force which tears its colonial dependencies asunder. Whether the existing contest between the different classes of society in the British islands terminates in the lasting ascendant of the multitude, or the establishment, by democratic support, of a centralised despotism, the result will be equally fatal to our supremacy in the East—in the first case, by terminating the steady rule of aristocratic foresight; in the last, by drying up the fountains of popular energy.

But whatever may be the ultimate fate of the British empire in India, it will not fall without having left an imperishable name, and bequeathed enduring benefits to the human race. First of all the Christian family, England has set its foot in the East, not to enslave but to bless; alone of all the conquering nations in the world, she has erected, amidst Asiatic bondage, the glorious fabric of European justice. To assert that her dominion has tended only to social happiness, that equity has regulated all her measures, and integrity pervaded every part of her administration, would be to assert more than ever has been, or ever will be produced by human nature. Doubtless many of her deeds have been cruel and ruthless—many of her designs selfish and oppressive. But when interest has ceased to blind, or panegyric to mislead, the sober voice of truth will confess, that her sway in

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Great and
lasting bene-
fits it has
already pro-
duced in
human
affairs.

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Hindostan has contributed in an extraordinary degree to correct the disorders of society; to extricate from hopeless oppression the labouring, to restrain by just administration the tyranny of the higher orders; and that public happiness was never so equally diffused, general prosperity never so thoroughly established among all ranks, as under the British rule, since the descendants of Shem first came to sojourn on the banks of the Ganges. Already the fame of its equitable sway, and its thorough protection of all classes, has spread far and sunk deep into the mind of the East. Mahommedan prejudice has been shaken by the exhibition, amidst its severities, of Christian beneficence; and even the ancient fabric of Hindoo superstition has begun to yield to the ascendant of European enterprise. Whether the appointed season has yet arrived for the conversion of the worshippers of Brahma to the precepts of a purer faith, and for the vast plains of Hindostan to be peopled by the followers of the Cross, as yet lies buried in the womb of time. But, whatever may be the destiny of Asia, the British standard has not appeared on its plains in vain; the remembrance of the blessed days of its rule will never be forgotten; and more glorious even than the triumph of her arms, have been the seeds of future freedom which the justice and integrity of English government have sown in the regions of the sun.

CHAPTER L.

CONTINENTAL SYSTEM, AND IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT OF
 NAPOLEON. JULY 1807—AUGUST 1812.

WHEN the battle of Trafalgar annihilated the prospect of invading England, and extinguished all his hopes of soon bringing the maritime war to a successful issue, Napoleon did not abandon the contest in despair. Quick in perception, he saw at once that the vast preparations in the Channel must go for nothing; that the flotilla at Boulogne would be rotten before a fleet capable of protecting its passage could be assembled; and that every successive year would enable England more exclusively to engross the commerce of the world, and banish his flag more completely from the ocean. But he was not on that account discouraged. Fertile in resources, indomitable in resolution, implacable in hatred, he resolved to change the method, not the object, of his hostility. He indulged the hope that he would succeed, through the extent and terror of his Continental victories, in achieving the destruction of England, by a process more slow indeed, but in the end, perhaps, still more certain. His design toward this object consisted of two parts, both essential to the success of the general project, and to the prosecution of which his efforts, during the whole remainder of his reign, were directed.¹

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 L.

1807.

I.
 Change in
 Napoleon's
 projects for
 the subjugation of England.

¹ Las Cas.
 v. 8, 15.

The first part of his plan was to combine all the Continental states into one great alliance against England,

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1807.

2.

Plan of
uniting all
Europe in
the Conti-
nental
System.

and compel them to exclude, in the most rigid manner, the British flag and British merchandise from their harbours. This system had long obtained possession of his mind; he had made it the condition of every treaty between a maritime state and France, even before he ascended the consular throne. The adroit flattery which he applied to the mind of the Emperor Paul, and the skill with which he combined the northern powers into the maritime confederacy in 1800, were all directed to the same end; and accordingly the exclusion of the English flag from their harbours was the fundamental condition of that alliance.* The proclamation of the principles of the armed neutrality by the northern powers at that crisis, filled him with confident expectations that the period had then arrived when this great object was to be attained. But the victory of Nelson at Copenhagen dissolved all these hopes, and threw him back to the system of ordinary warfare, afterwards so cruelly defeated by the battle of Trafalgar. The astonishing results of the battle of Jena, however, again revived his projects of excluding British commerce from the Continent; and thence the BERLIN DECREE, to be immediately considered, and the anxiety which he evinced at Tilsit to procure, by any sacrifices, the accession of Alexander to the confederacy.

* The Directory had previously adopted the system of compelling the exclusion of English goods from all the European harbours; but the multiplied disasters of their administration prevented them from carrying it into any general execution. By a decree, issued on 18th January 1798, it was declared, "That all ships having for their cargoes, in whole or in part, any English merchandise, shall be held good prize, whoever is the proprietor of such merchandise, which should be held contraband from the single circumstance of its coming from England or any of its foreign settlements; that the harbours of France should be shut against all ships having touched at England, except in cases of distress—and that neutral sailors found on board English vessels *should be put to death.*" Napoleon, soon after his accession to the consular

throne, issued a decree, revoking this and all other decrees passed during the Revolution, and reverting to the old and humane laws of the monarchy in this particular; but in the exultation consequent on the battle of Jena, he very nearly returned to the violence and barbarity of the decree of the Directory.—See *Ann. Reg.* 1800, 54, 55; and 1807, 226, 227.

Jan. 18, 1798.

Feb. 9, 1800.

Jan. 28, 1800.

The second part of the plan was to obtain possession, by negotiation, force, or fraud, of all the fleets of Europe, and gradually bring them to the great central point near the English coast, from whence they might ultimately be directed, with decisive effect, against the British shores. By the Continental System he hoped to weaken the resources of England, to hamper its revenue, and, by the spread of commercial distress, break up the unanimity which then prevailed among its inhabitants. But he knew too well the spirit of the ruling part of the nation to expect that, by the spread of commercial distress alone, he would succeed in the contest. He was desirous of reducing its strength by a long previous blockade, but it was by an assault at last that he hoped to carry the day. In order to prepare for that grand event, he was at the utmost pains to increase his naval force. Amidst all the expenditure occasioned by his military campaigns, he proposed to construct, and to a certain extent actually did construct, from ten to twenty sail of the line every year ; while vast sums were annually applied to the great naval harbours at Antwerp, Flushing, Cherbourg, and Brest. The first, from its admirable situation and close proximity to the British shores, he considered as the great outwork of the Continent against England ; he regarded it, as he himself has told us, as “itself worth a kingdom ;” and but for the invincible tenacity with which he held to this great acquisition, he might with ease have obtained peace in 1814, and have left his family at this moment seated on the throne of France.¹ But it was not with the fleets of France alone that he intended to engage in this mighty enterprise ; those of all Europe were to be combined in the attempt. The navies of Denmark and Portugal, in virtue of the secret article in the treaty of Tilsit,² were to be demanded from their respective sovereigns, and seized by force, if not voluntarily surrendered ; that of Russia was to come round from the Black Sea and the Baltic to Brest and Antwerp, and join in the general crusade ; until at

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1807.

3.

And getting
hold of and
concentrat-
ing their
fleets in the
French and
Flemish
harbours.

¹ Las Cas.
v. 8, 15.

² *Ante*, c.
xlv. § 79.

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L.

1807.

¹ Las Cases.
v. 14. *Jorn.*
ii. 499.

4.
Object of
the Berlin
Decree.

length a hundred ships of the line and two hundred thousand men were prepared, on the coasts of the Channel, to carry to the shores of England the terrors of Gallic invasion. "When in this manner," said Napoleon, "I had established my ground, so as to bring the two nations to wrestle, as it were, body to body, the issue could not be doubtful, for we had forty millions of French against fifteen millions of English. I would have terminated by a battle of Actium."¹*

It was therefore no momentary burst of anger or sudden fit of exultation, occasioned by his unparalleled triumphs, which induced Napoleon, by his celebrated decree from Berlin, to declare the British islands in a state of blockade. It was the result of much thought and anxious deliberation, of a calm survey of the resources at his disposal, and the means of resistance which yet remained to his antagonists. The treaty of Tilsit gave the English government ample room for serious reflection on the dangers which now beset them. The accession of Russia to the Continental league was thereby rendered certain; the secret articles of the treaty, of which, by great exertions,

* Napoleon's projects, in regard to the maritime war against England, have been already explained;² but this is a point of such vital importance to the future security of the British empire, that it will well bear a second note from an additional authority. "He said," says Las Cases, "that he had done much for Antwerp, but nothing to what he proposed to have done. By sea, he proposed to have made it a mortal point of attack against the enemy; by land, he wished to render it a sure resource in case of great disasters—a true point of refuge for the national safety; he wished to render it capable of containing an entire army after defeat, and of resisting a year of open trenches, during which the nation might have risen in a mass for its relief. The world admired much the works already executed at Antwerp—its numerous dockyards, arsenals, and wet-docks; but all that, said the Emperor, was nothing—it was but the commercial town; the military town was to have been on the other bank, where the land was already purchased; three-deckers were to have been there constructed, and covered sheds established to keep the ships of the line dry in time of peace. Everything there was planned on the most colossal scale. Antwerp was itself a province. That place, said the Emperor, was the chief cause of my being here; for, if I could have made up my mind to give up Antwerp, I might have concluded peace at Chatillon in 1814."—LAS CASES, vii. 43, 44.

Gigantic as these designs for Antwerp were, they were but a part of what Napoleon meditated or had constructed for his grand enterprise against England. "Magnificent works," says Las Cases, "had been set agoing at Cher-

they soon obtained possession,* made them acquainted with the intention of France and Russia, not only to unite their forces against Great Britain, but to compel Denmark and Portugal to do the same. In addition to having their flag proscribed from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Gulf of Bothnia, they had the prospect of seeing all the maritime forces of Europe arrayed against their independence. The assistance of Sweden could not much longer be relied on, pressed as she would soon be by her colossal neighbour; the harbours of South America were still closed to her adventure; the neutrality of North America was already more than doubtful, and would certainly be soon abandoned, to range the United States by the side of France, in open enmity against Great Britain. Thus had England, proscribed from all civilised commerce over the whole world, and weakened in her resources by the internal suffering consequent on such a deprivation, the prospect of soon being compelled to maintain a contest with all the naval and military forces of Europe, directed by consummate ability, and actuated by inveterate hostility against her independence and renown.

bourg, where they had excavated out of the solid rock a basin capable of holding fifteen ships of the line and as many frigates, with the most splendid fortifications for their protection: the Emperor intended to have prepared that harbour to receive thirty more line-of-battle ships of the largest size. Innumerable works had been prepared to receive and protect the flotilla which was to be immediately concerned in the invasion of England; Boulogne was adapted to hold 2000 gunboats; Vimereux, Etaples, and Ambleteuse, 1000 more. The harbour of Flushing was to have been rendered impregnable, and enlarged so as to hold twenty of the largest ships of the line; while dockyards for the construction of twenty line-of-battle ships were to be formed at Antwerp, and constantly kept in full activity. So immense were the preparations on the French coast for the invasion of England! The Emperor frequently said that Antwerp was to him an entire province; a little kingdom in itself. He attached the greatest importance to it, often visited it in person, and regarded it as one of the most important of all his creations."—LAS CASES, vii. 51, 57. It is not a little curious that, within twenty years after his fall, the English government should have united its forces to those of France to restore this great outwork against British independence to the dominion of Belgium, and the rule of the son-in-law of France.

* They were obtained by the agency of the Count d'Antraigues.—HARD, ix. 431, *note*.—In the King's speech, on the 21st January 1808, it was said—"We are commanded by his majesty to inform you, that no sooner had the result of the negotiations at Tilsit confirmed the influence and control of France over

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A clear and constant perception of this prospect is indispensable both to the formation of a just opinion on the measures to which she was speedily driven in her own defence, and of the character of the illustrious men who, called to the direction of her councils and armies in such a gloomy situation, speedily raised her fortunes to an unparalleled pitch of glory and prosperity.

5.
Berlin Decree of 21st
Nov.

The English government, in 1806, after the occupation of Hanover by the Prussian troops, had issued an order, authorised by Mr Fox's cabinet, declaring the coasts of Prussia in a state of blockade. That the English navy was amply adequate to establish an effectual blockade of the two rivers which constitute the only outlet to Prussian commerce, cannot be doubted, when it is recollected that their fleets at that very moment kept every hostile harbour closed from the North Cape to Gibraltar.* This blockade,

the powers of the Continent, than his majesty was apprised of the intention of the enemy to combine those powers in one general confederacy, to be directed either to the entire subjugation of this kingdom, or to the imposing upon his majesty an insecure and ignominious peace. That for this purpose it was determined to force into hostility against this country, states which had hitherto been allowed by France to maintain or to purchase their neutrality; and to bring to bear upon different points of his majesty's dominions the whole of the naval force of Europe, and specifically the fleets of Denmark and Portugal. To place those fleets out of the power of such a confederacy, became, therefore, the indispensable duty of his Majesty." The complete accuracy of these assertions has been abundantly proved by the quotations from the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, already given; and ample confirmation of them will appear in the sequel of this chapter. Ministers, in the course of the debates which ensued on the Copenhagen expedition, were repeatedly called upon to produce their secret articles, or specify what private information they had received; but they constantly declined doing so, and in consequence it became a very general opinion at the time, that there were, in reality, no such secret articles, and that this assertion was put forward without foundation in the King's speech, to palliate an aggression which, on its own merits, was indefensible. It is now proved, however, that they had the secret information, and that they had the generosity to bear this load of obloquy rather than betray a confidence which might prove fatal to persons high in office in the French government. This was fully explained, many years afterwards, when the reasons for concealment no longer existed, by Lord Liverpool in parliament.—See *Parl. Deb.* x. 1.

* As this order in council is referred to by the French writers and their supporters in this country, as a vindication of the Berlin Decree, its provisions merit attention. It proceeds on the narrative, "That the Prussian government has, in a forcible and hostile manner, taken possession of the electorate of Hanover, and has also notified that all British ships shall be excluded from the ports of the Prussian dominions, and from certain other ports in the north of

however, and one at the same time declared of the coasts of the Channel, gave Napoleon an excuse for the famous Berlin Decree against English commerce, which, on the preamble "that the British government had violated the law of nations, so far as regarded neutral vessels; that it regards as enemies every individual belonging to a hostile state, and, in consequence, makes prize, not merely of the crews of merchant vessels equipped as privateers, but also of those of such vessels when merely engaged in the transport of merchandise; that it extends to the ships and the objects of commerce that right of conquest which does not properly belong except to public property; that it includes commercial cities and harbours, and mouths of rivers, in the hardships of blockade, which, on the best interpretation of the law of nations, is applicable only to fortified places; that it declares harbours blockaded before

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Europe, and not suffered to enter or trade therein;" and then declares, "That no ship or vessel belonging to any of his Majesty's subjects be permitted to enter or clear from any ports of Prussia, and that a general embargo or stop be made of all Prussian ships and vessels whatever, now within, or which shall hereafter come into, any of the ports, harbours, or roads of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, together with all persons and effects on board the said ships and vessels; but that *the utmost care be taken for the preservation of the cargoes on board of the said ships or vessels, so that no damage or embezzlement whatever be sustained.*"—*Ann. Reg.* 1806, 677. This was followed, upon 16th May 1806, by an order in council, signed by Mr Fox, which, "considering the new measures adopted by the enemy for the obstruction of British commerce, declared the whole coasts, harbours, and rivers, from the Elbe to Brest inclusive, as actually blockaded; provided always that this blockade shall not extend to neutral vessels having on board merchandise *not belonging to the enemies of his Majesty*, and not contraband of war; excepting, however, the coast from Ostend to the mouth of the river Seine, which is hereby declared subject to a *blockade of the strictest kind.*"¹ There can be no doubt that the coasts thus declared in a state of blockade were, in the strictest sense, subject to such declaration, since the peril of leaving the harbours they contained was such that hardly one of the enemy's armed vessels ventured to incur it. This decree, such as it was, was repealed as to all ports from the Elbe to the Ems inclusive, by a British order in council of 26th September 1806.—See MARTENS, v. 469, *Sup.* These orders in council, thus providing only for the blockade of harbours and coasts, which it was at the moment in the highest degree perilous to enter, or for the *interim detention* of the Prussian cargoes, in retaliation for the unprovoked invasion of Hanover by the Prussian troops, and exclusion of British commerce, in pursuance of the offers of Napoleon already detailed, were clearly within the law of nations, as admitted by the French Emperor himself, and, in truth, a most moderate exercise of the rights of war. They afford, therefore, no excuse or palliation whatever for the Berlin Decree.—See *Ann.*

April 5, 1806.

¹ Mart. Sup.
v. 437.

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which it has not a single ship of war, although a place cannot be considered as blockaded till it is in such a manner beset that entry cannot be obtained without imminent danger ; that it even declares blockaded places which all its naval forces are inadequate to blockade, as entire coasts and a whole empire ; that this monstrous violation of the law of nations has no other object but to obstruct the communications of other people, and elevate the industry and commerce of England upon the ruins of that of the Continent ; that this being the evident design of England, whoever deals on the Continent in British merchandise by that very act favours its designs, and becomes participant in them ; that this conduct of England, worthy of the first barbarous ages, has hitherto turned to its own great profit and the detriment of all other states ; and that the law of nature entitles every belligerent to oppose its enemy with the arms with which it combats, and the mode of hostility which it has adopted, when it disregards every idea of justice and liberality, the result of civilisation among mankind :” on this preamble it declared—

6.
Its provi-
sions.

“1. The British islands are placed in a state of blockade. 2. Every species of commerce and communication with them is prohibited ; all letters or packets addressed in English, or in the English characters, shall be seized at the post-office, and their circulation interdicted. 3. Every British subject, of what rank or condition whatever, who shall be found in the countries occupied by our troops, or those of our allies, shall be made prisoner of war. 4. Every warehouse, merchandise, or property of any sort, belonging to a subject of Great Britain, or coming from its manufactories or colonies, is declared good prize. 5. Commerce of every kind in English goods is prohibited ; and every species of merchandise belonging to England, or emanating from its workshops or colonies, is declared

Reg. 1806, 677 ; and see the *previous* Prussian proclamation, excluding British trade, on 28th March 1806. *Ibid.* 692 ; and MARTENS, *Sup.* v. 435.

good prize. 6. The half of the confiscated value shall be devoted to indemnifying those merchants whose vessels have been seized by the English cruisers, for the losses which they have sustained. 7. No vessel coming directly from England, or any of its colonies, or having touched there since the publication of the present decree, shall be received into any harbour. 8. Every vessel which, by means of a false declaration, shall have effected such entry, shall be liable to seizure, and the ship and cargo shall be confiscated as if they had also belonged to England. 9. The prize-court of Paris is intrusted with the determination of all questions arising out of this decree in France, or the countries occupied by our armies; that of Milan, with the decision of all similar questions in the kingdom of Italy. 10. This decree shall be communicated to the Kings of Spain, Naples, Holland, and Etruria, and to our other allies, whose subjects have been the victims, like our own, of the injustice and barbarity of English legislation. 11. The ministers of foreign affairs, of war, of marine, of finance and of justice, of police, and all postmasters, are charged, each in his own department, with the execution of the present decree.”¹ *

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¹ Martens, i. 437. Ann. Reg. 1806, 201. Schoell, ix. 344; and Dum. xvii. 46, 47.

Such was the famous Berlin decree against English commerce, which was only an extension to all Europe of the declaration and order that all English merchandise should be liable to confiscation, which had been issued by Napoleon at Leipsic on the 18th of October preceding, and at Hamburg on the 3d November. It was not allowed

7.
Orders for its rigorous execution, and its evasion in Holland.

* Two days after the publication of the Berlin Decree, Napoleon wrote the following highly characteristic letter to Junot, then governor of Paris:—"Take especial care that the *ladies* of your establishment take Swiss tea; it is as good as that of China. Coffee made from chicory is noways inferior to that of Arabia. Let them make use of these substitutes in their drawing-rooms, instead of amusing themselves with talking politics like Madame de Stael. Let them take care also that no part of their dress is composed of English merchandise; *tell that to Madame Junot*: if the wives of my chief officers do not set the example, whom can I expect to follow it? It is a *contest of life or death between France and England*; I must look for the most cordial support in all those by whom I am surrounded."—NAPOLEON to JUNOT, 23d Nov. 1806; D'ABRANTES, ix. 287, 288.

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L.
1807.

to remain an instant a dead letter. Orders were despatched in all directions to act upon it with the utmost rigour. With undisguised reluctance, but trembling hands, the subject monarchs and prefects prepared to carry the stern requisition into execution. So strongly was its unjust character and ruinous tendency felt in Holland, that Napoleon's own brother, Louis, king of that country, at first positively refused to submit to its iniquity; and at length could only be prevailed on, in the first instance, to promulgate it in the foreign countries occupied by the Dutch troops, reserving its execution in his own dominions till it should be ascertained whether the measures already in force should prove insufficient.* So strongly did this opposition on the part of his brother irritate Napoleon, that he declared in a fit of ill-humour, "that if Louis did not submit to his orders, he would cause domiciliary visits to be made through the whole of Holland." Nevertheless, as Louis perceived, what every person in the country knew, that this rigorous decree, if fully acted upon, would occasion the total ruin of his dominions, it was enforced in a very loose manner in the United Provinces.¹

In the North of Germany, however, it was not only most rigorously put in force, but the decree was made a

¹ Bour. vii.
265, 326.
Louis Buon.
i. 295, 297.

* "This decree," says Louis Buonaparte, King of Holland, "was as unjust as it was impolitic. The command that it should be obeyed by the Kings of Spain, Holland, Naples, and Etruria, was the commencement of universal empire, if it had any meaning; if not so intended, it was senseless. The ground of justification put forth in the decree, viz., 'that England applies the right of blockade, not only to fortified places and the mouths of rivers, but to whole coasts, when the law of nations only authorises that rigour in the case of places so closely invested that they cannot be entered or quitted without danger,' is itself its chief condemnation; for a nation whose vessels can proceed to a distance from its frontiers, even to the waters of the countries belonging to its enemies, is undoubtedly better entitled to say that it blockades coasts and ports, than a nation without a navy to say that it blockades an island surrounded by numerous fleets. In this last case, it is the Continental power which voluntarily places itself in a state of blockade. Besides, wrong cannot authorise wrong, nor injustice injustice. The 4th and 5th articles of the Berlin Decree are atrocious. What! because the English seize merchants travelling from one place to another, and subject the vessels of individuals to ill treatment, shall we, in an age of reason, dare to seize every Englishman, and what.

pretence for a thousand iniquitous extortions and abuses, which augmented tenfold its practical oppression. An army of locusts, in the form of inspectors, customhouse-officers, comptrollers, and other functionaries, fell upon all the countries occupied by the French troops, and made the search for English goods a pretext for innumerable frauds, vexations, and iniquities. "They pillaged, they plundered," says Bourrienne, "on a systematic plan, in all the countries of the north of Germany to which my diplomatic mission extended. Rapine was in a manner established by law, and executed with such blind fury, that often the legalised robbers did not know the value of the articles they had seized. All the English merchandise was seized at Hamburg, Lübeck, Bremen, and the other Hanse Towns; and Berthier wrote to me, that in that way I should obtain ten millions of francs for the Emperor. In point of fact, I compounded with the proprietors for twenty millions, (£800,000;) and yet such was the demand for these useful articles, that when exposed to sale by the proprietors, after paying this enormous ransom, their advanced prices brought them a very handsome profit." ¹ *

CHAP.

L.

1807.

8.

Its rigorous
execution in
the north of
Germany.

¹ Bour. vii.
265, 326,
327. Louis
Buon. Doc.
sur la Hol-
lande, i. 295,
309.

The British government replied to the Berlin Decree, in the first instance, by an order in council of 7th January

ever of their property we can lay hold of? This was augmenting and justifying the injury of the English government. The 6th article is barbarous, the 8th still worse. Here, by a single stroke of the pen, the property of all Frenchmen who, up to that period, had traded in English goods, is taken from them: vessels even thrown on the coast by tempests are to be refused admission into any port. Enough has been said to justify the extreme repugnance of the King of Holland to carry this decree into execution: it threw him into the utmost consternation; he felt at once that it would speedily prove the ruin of Holland, and afford a pretext for oppressing it. This measure appeared to him as singular and revolutionary as denationalising. He ventured to write to the Emperor that he believed this gigantic measure to be calculated to effect the ruin of France, and all commercial nations connected with it, before it could ruin England. Obligated, however to carry it into effect, under the penalty of a complete rupture with France, he only endeavoured to do so in the least illegal and most independent manner possible."—LOUIS BUONAPARTE, *Documents sur la Hollande*, i. 294, 307, 308.

* A striking instance, which has been already noticed, occurred, a few months after the promulgation of the Berlin Decree, of the utter impossibility of carry-

CHAP.
L.

1807.

9.

First order
in council
by the Bri-
tish govern-
ment.
Jan. 7, 1807.

1807, issued by Lord Howick, which, on the preamble of the French decree, and the right of retaliation thence arising to Great Britain, declared, "that no vessel shall be permitted to trade from one port to another, if both belong to France or her allies, and shall be so far under their control as that British vessels are excluded therefrom ; and the captains of all British vessels are hereby required to warn every neutral vessel coming from any such port, and destined to such other port, to discontinue her voyage ; and any vessel, after having been so warned, or after having had a reasonable time allowed it for obtaining information of the present order in council, which shall, notwithstanding, persist in such a voyage to such other port, shall be declared good prize." The object of this order was to deprive the French, and all the nations subject to their control, which had embraced the Continental System, of the advantages of the coasting trade in neutral bottoms ; and, considering the much more violent and extensive character of the Berlin Decree, there can be no doubt that it was a very mild and lenient measure of retaliation. This order was relaxed soon after as to vessels containing grain or provisions for Great Britain, and as to all vessels whatever belonging to the Hanse Towns, if employed in any trade to or from the dominions of Great Britain.¹

After the treaty of Tilsit, however, had completely subjected the Continent to the dominion or control of the

ing such a monstrous system of legislation into execution. Shortly after the Berlin Decree had been issued, there arrived at Hamburg an order for the immediate furnishing of fifty thousand great-coats, two hundred thousand pair of shoes, sixteen thousand coats, thirty-seven thousand waistcoats, and other articles in proportion. The resources of the Hanse Towns were wholly unequal to the supply of so great a requisition in so short a time ; and after trying in vain every other expedient, Bourrienne, the French diplomatic agent, was obliged to contract with *English houses* for the supply, which speedily arrived ; and while the Emperor was denouncing the severest penalties against the possession of English goods, and boasting that by the Continental System he had excluded British manufactures from the Continent, his own army was arrayed in the cloths of Leeds and Halifax, and his soldiers would have perished amidst the snows of Eylau but for the seasonable efforts of British industry.—See BOURRIENNE, vii. 292, 294.

¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 127, 130.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 671,
672.

French Emperor, it soon appeared that some more rigorous and extensive system of retaliation was called for. A few months' experience was sufficient to show that the Berlin decree, while it rigorously excluded every species of British manufacture or colonial produce from the ports of the Continent, by no means inflicted a proportional injury upon the inhabitants of the countries where its provisions were put in force ; and that in truth it opened up a most lucrative commerce to the industry and colonies of *neutral powers*, at the expense of the vital interests of the British empire. By prohibiting, under the penalty of confiscation, the importation of every species of British produce, it necessarily left the market of the Continent open to the manufacturing industry and colonial produce of other states ; and this in the end could not but prove highly injurious to English industry. The obvious and direct retaliation would have consisted in prohibiting the importation into the British dominions of the produce of France, or of its dependencies which had embraced the Continental System, whether in their own or neutral bottoms ; but it was extremely doubtful whether this would have been by any means a retribution equally injurious. England was essentially a commercial state. The resources from which she maintained the contest were in great part drawn from the produce of her colonies or manufactories ; and the general cessation of commercial intercourse, therefore, could not fail to be felt with more severity in her dominions than in the Continental nations. What to them, considered as a whole, was secondary, to her was vital ; the suffering which with them would be diffused over a wide circle, to her would be concentrated in the narrow space of a few counties. In these circumstances some measure seemed indispensable which should inflict upon the enemy not merely the same *injustice*, but the same *suffering* which he had occasioned ; and, by causing his subjects to feel in their own persons the consequences of his aggression, produce that general discontent which

CHAP.

L.

1807.

10.

Reasons
which led to
a farther and
more rigorous
measure.

CHAP.
L.

1807.

II.

Orders in
Council of
11th Nov.

might arm them against his authority, or render necessary a return to more equitable measures.

Under the influence of these ideas, the celebrated Orders in Council of 11th November 1807 were issued, which, on the preamble of the British islands having been declared by the Berlin decree in a state of blockade, and of all importation of British merchandise having been absolutely prohibited, and of the mitigated measure of retaliation, adopted in the Order in Council of 7th January 1807, having proved inadequate to the object of effecting the repeal of that unprecedented system of warfare, declared that from henceforth “all the ports and places of France and her allies, from which, though not at war with his Majesty, the British flag is excluded, shall be subject to the same restrictions, in respect of trade and navigation, as if the same were *actually blockaded in the most strict and rigorous manner*; and that all trade in articles the produce or manufacture of the said countries or colonies, shall be deemed to be unlawful, and all such articles declared good prize; declaring always that nothing herein contained shall be construed to extend to capture or detention of any vessel or cargo which shall belong to a country not declared by this order subject to a strict blockade, which shall have cleared out with such cargo from such port to which she belongs, either in Europe or America, or from some free port in the British colonies, under circumstances in which such trade from such free port is permitted, direct to some port or place in the colonies of his Majesty’s enemies, or from those colonies direct to the countries to which such vessel belongs, or to some free port in his Majesty’s colonies; nor to any vessel or cargo belonging to a country not at war with his Majesty, which shall have cleared out from some port in this kingdom, and shall be proceeding direct to the port specified in her clearance; nor to any vessel or cargo belonging to any country not at war with his Majesty, which shall be coming from any port or place in Europe

declared by this order to be subject to a strict blockade, destined to some port or place in Europe belonging to his Majesty, and be on her voyage direct thereto." All vessels contravening this order are declared good prize. "And whereas countries not engaged in the war have acquiesced in the orders of France, and have given countenance and effect to these prohibitions, by obtaining from agents of the enemy certain documents styled 'certificates of origin,' therefore if any vessel, after having had reasonable time to receive notification of the present order, shall be found carrying any such certificate, it shall be declared good prize, together with the goods on board."¹*

CHAP.
L.
1807.

¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 134, 138.

Divested of the technical phraseology in which, for the sake of legal precision, these orders are couched, they in effect amount to this: Napoleon had declared the British islands in a state of blockade, and subjected all goods of British produce or manufacture to confiscation within his dominions, or those of the countries subjected to his control, and prohibited from entering any harbour all vessels which had touched at any British port; and the English government, in reply, proclaimed France and all the Continental states in a state of blockade, and declared all vessels good prize which should be bound for any of their harbours, excepting such as had previously cleared out from, or touched at, a British harbour. Thus France prohibited all commerce with England, or traffic in English goods, and England prohibited all commerce between any of the states which had embraced the Continental System and each other, unless in vessels bound for some British harbour.

12.
Import of
these Or-
ders.

* By a supplementary Order in Council, the severe enactments of this regulation were declared not to extend to "articles of the produce and manufactures of the blockaded countries which shall be laden on board British ships;" and by a more material one, issued six weeks afterwards, it was provided, "that nothing in the order of 11th November shall be construed so as to permit any vessel to import any produce or manufactures of the enemy's colonies in the West Indies, direct from such colonies to any port in the British dominions."²

Additional
Orders in
Council, 25th
Nov. 1807,
and 18th Dec.
1807.

² Parl. Deb.
x. 148.

CHAP.
L.

1807.

13.

Milan Decree, 17th Dec. 1807, issued by Napoleon.

Napoleon was not slow in replying to these menacing measures. By a decree dated from Milan on 17th December 1807, he declared—"1. That every vessel, of whatever nation, which shall have submitted to be searched by British cruisers, or paid any impost levied by the English government, shall be considered as having lost the privileges of a neutral flag, and be regarded and dealt with as an English vessel.—2. Being so considered, they shall be declared good prize.—3. The British islands are declared in a state of blockade. Every vessel, of whatever nation, and with whatever cargo, coming from any British harbour, or from any of the English colonies, or from any country occupied by the English troops, or bound for England, or for the English colonies, or for any country occupied by the English troops, is declared good prize.—4. These rigorous measures shall cease in regard to any nations which shall have caused the English government to respect the rights of their flag, but continue in regard to all others, and never be released till Great Britain shows a disposition to return to the law of nations as well as those of justice and honour." It may safely be affirmed, that the rage of belligerent powers, and the mutual violation of the law of nations, could not go beyond these furious manifestoes. They produced, as might have been expected, most important effects, both on the Continent and in the British isles, and gave rise to memorable and luminous debates in parliament, in which all that could be advanced, both for and against the justice and expedience of these measures, was fully brought forward.¹

¹ Mart. Sup. i. 452, 453. Ann. Reg. 1807, p. 779. State Papers.

14.

Arguments in parliament against the Orders in Council.

On the one hand, it was strongly urged by Lord Grenville, Lord Howick, and Lord Erskine—"Let the case at once be stated in the manner which has produced the whole controversy. France, on 21st November, issued her decree, which announced the intention to distress this country in a way unauthorised by the public law, subjecting to confiscation the ships and cargoes of neutrals

with British merchandise, or going to, or coming from Great Britain, with their accustomed trade. Such a decree undoubtedly introduced a rule which the law of nations forbids, as being, even as between belligerents, and much more as with neutrals, an aggravation of the miseries of war, and unauthorised by the practice of civilised states. If carried into execution, it would vest the suffering belligerent with the right of retaliation; and indeed, as between the belligerents only, it may be admitted that the mere publication of such a decree would authorise the nation so offended to disregard the law of nations towards the nation so offending. But that is not the present question; the point here is, not whether we would have been justified in retaliating upon France the injury she has inflicted upon us, but whether we are justified in inflicting, in our turn, a new and still more aggravated species of injury on *neutral* states. If A strikes me, I may retaliate by striking him, and neither law nor reason will weigh very nicely the comparative severity of the blow given from that at first received. But it is a new application of the term retaliation, to say, that if A strikes me, I may retaliate by striking B. If the interdiction of a neutral from trading with us is submitted to by him from favour to the belligerent, he directly interposes in the war, and his character of a neutral is at an end; if he does so from terror or weakness, in that case too he ceases to be a neutral, because he suffers an unjust pressure to be affixed upon us. But, admitting that, the question remains, what right have we to retaliate upon a neutral upon whom the decree has never been executed—who in no shape has been made either the instrument or the victim of oppression by the enemy?

“Now that is the real question, and the only question here. America, the only great maritime power which has not now taken a decided part in the contest, was virtually excluded from its operation. The air was white with her sails; the sea was pressed down with her ship-

CHAP.
L.
1807.

15.
Special in-
jury inflicted by them
on Ame-
rica.

CHAP.
L.
1807.

ping, nearly half as numerous as our own, bringing her produce into every port of England, and carrying our commodities and manufactures into every corner of Europe. Up to the date of the Orders in Council, she continued to take, without the least defalcation, ten millions of our manufactures, and she carried to other nations what was beyond her own consumption. She carried on this traffic, in the face of the French decree of 21st November, when we could not have done it for ourselves. She did this, it is true, from no feeling of friendship towards us, but from regard to her own interests; but Providence has so arranged human affairs, that, by a wise pursuit of self-interest, the general interests of mankind are advanced. We had so much the start of other nations that we had only to lie by, and they, for their own purposes, came to our relief. America smuggled our goods into France for her own interest, and France bought them for hers. The people cheered the Emperor at the Tuileries every day, but they broke his laws every night. The Berlin decree, in fact, had become a dead letter, either from the connivance, or licenses for contraband trade issued by the French government; she had no ships to carry her decrees into effect; and the barbarous system of the enemy was rapidly falling into that neglect in which Mr Pitt, with great sagacity, left the corresponding decree of the Directory in 1798.

16.
Their gen-
eral injustice.

“Such was the state of matters, when in an evil hour our own government interfered, and gave a helping hand to the enemy. The Orders in Council were the real executors of the Berlin decree. Under them we employ our own shipping to stop our own trade upon the sea; we make prisons of our own ports to terrify away the neutral seamen, who otherwise would carry on our traffic, and find a vent for our manufactures; and play the very game of France, by throwing neutral powers into her arms instead of our own. And this, it seems, is retalia-

tion! Can we who do such things object to the Irish rebels, who burned the notes of an obnoxious banker to ruin his trade? Our Orders in Council have thrown the mistake of the ignorant Irish into the shade. The order of 7th January 1807 was liable to none of these objections. It introduced or adopted no new or illegal principle; it merely reprobated the illegal decree of France, and asserted the right of retaliation by actual blockade—a restriction which, it is admitted on all hands, neutrals must submit to. But the order of the 11th November stands in a very different situation. Sir William Scott has told us, in the case of the *Maria*, (Robinson, i. 154,) that no blockade can be made by the law of nations, unless force sufficient is stationed to prevent an entry. Can this be predicated of all Europe put together? Is every harbour and river from Hamburg to Cadiz, so closely watched that no vessel can enter any of them without evident risk of capture? Such a proposition is clearly out of the question; and therefore government has issued an Order in Council, which its own prize courts, if adjudicating in conformity with their former principles, must declare to be contrary to the law of nations, and therefore refuse to execute.

“Nor is it in this view only that these orders are illegal. They purpose to interrupt the commerce of neutral and unoffending nations, carrying on their accustomed traffic in innocent articles, between their own country and the ports of our enemies, not actually blockaded, and even between their own country and our allies; they compel neutrals, under the pain of confiscation, to come to our ports, and there submit to regulations, restrictions, and duties, which will expose them to certain destruction the moment they approach the enemy’s shore; they declare all vessels good prize which carry documents or certificates declaring that the articles of the cargo are not the produce of his Majesty’s dominions, contrary alike to the law of nations and the rights and

CHAP.
L.
1807.

17.
Their reac-
tion upon
England
herself.

CHAP.
L.
1807.

liberties of the people of this realm. Such a monstrous system of aggression never was and never should be successful. Let us leave to our enemies the guilt of discord and bloodshed, and seek to support our country by the virtues of beneficence and peace. The idea that you can starve the enemy into submission, or the adoption of a more reasonable mode of hostility, is founded on an essential and fatal mistake in regard to the relative situation of Great Britain and the Continental states in the contest. The former must, of necessity, be the greatest sufferer. The Continental nations will lose only articles of luxury, but the British will be deprived of those of necessity : sugar may rise to an extravagant price in Germany, but the manufacturers will be deprived of their daily bread in England. The greatest calamity which could befall this country, in her present predicament, would be a war with America, both as depriving her of the chief vent for her manufactured industry, and of the advantage of neutral carriers, who would contrive, for their own profit, to elude every Continental blockade, in order to introduce them into the Continental states. And surely the present moment, when we have all Europe, from the North Cape to Gibraltar, arrayed against us, is not that when it is expedient, gratuitously and unnecessarily, to withdraw so beneficial a customer from our markets, and add his forces to those of the enemy.”¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 682, 930,
970.

18.
Reply of the
supporters
of the Orders
in both
Houses.

On the other hand, it was argued by Lord Hawkesbury, the Advocate-General, and Lord Chancellor Eldon —“It is in vain to refer to the law of nations for any authority on this subject, in the unprecedented circumstances in which this country is now placed. What usually passes by that name is merely a collection of the *dicta* of wise men who have devoted themselves to this subject in different ages, applied to the circumstances of the world at the period in which they wrote, or circumstances nearly resembling them, but none having the least resemblance to the circumstances in which this

country is now placed. Such as they are, however, they all admit, what indeed common sense dictates, the right of retaliation, or of resisting an enemy by the same means by which he attacks ourselves. Nothing can be more expedient in the general case, than to adhere, with scrupulous exactness, to the law of nations ; but if one belligerent commences a violation of it, it is sometimes indispensable, in order to put an end to the enormity, to make the enemy feel its effects. In some cases the most civilised nations have been driven to the melancholy necessity of putting prisoners to death, to terminate a similar practice on the part of their enemies. Doubtless, in the general case, quarter should be given ; but during the fury of a charge, or the tumult of an assault, it is universally felt, by the experience of mankind, that a less humane rule must be followed. Every belligerent should usually adhere to the ordinary instruments of human destruction ; but if your enemy fires red-hot shot, you are entitled to do the same. Russia herself acted on this principle in repelling, when still a neutral power, the aggressions of France ; she authorised the seizure of all ships proceeding to France. Lord Howick himself, in his letter to the Danish minister, in relation to the order of 7th January, had clearly vindicated the justice, not only of his own measure, but of the more extensive measure, based on the same principles, which was ultimately adopted.^{1*}

CHAP.
L.
1807.

¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 674, 971,
and 975.

“The Berlin decree of 21st November is at once the foundation and the justification of the present proceed-

* Lord Howick's (afterwards Earl Grey) letter to the Danish minister, who complained of the British order of 7th January, was a very able state paper, and among other things observed—“The French government, in adopting a measure at once so violent in itself, and so unjust in its consequences, committed a manifest act of aggression, though immediately levelled at Great Britain, against the rights of every state not engaged in the war, which, if not resisted on their part, must unavoidably deprive them of the privilege of a fair neutrality, and suspend the operation of treaties formed for the protection of their rights in relation to Great Britain. The injury which would be sustained by England, if she suffered her commerce with foreign nations to be thus interdicted, while that of the enemy with them should remain unmolested, is so manifest that it

Able note of
Lord Howick
on this sub-
ject to the
Danish min-
ister.

CHAP.
L.

1807.

19.

The terms of
the Berlin
decree.

ing. That decree declared the British islands in a state of blockade, and prohibited all commerce, even in neutral ships, in the produce or manufactures of this country—it went so far as even to exclude the possibility of one neutral nation trading in safety with another. But it is said that this threatened blockade was not, in point of fact, carried into effect; and that, in some other less exceptionable mode, its consequences might have been avoided. But it is immaterial whether it was executed at sea or not; unquestionably it received execution, and the most rigorous execution, at land. Foreign ships were only enabled to come to this country with their foreign produce—they were not permitted, under the pain of confiscation, to take away our goods in return—and can it be said, that this is not a real execution?

20.

The French
possessed of
no blockad-
ing force.

“The French government justify, in the preamble of their decree, their proceedings, on the ground of the previous proclamation of the late administration in April 1806, which declared the coasts of the Channel in a state of blockade. But that is a mistake in point of fact; for in no one single instance did they declare either a harbour, or a coast containing several harbours, in a state of blockade, without having previously invested it. The coasts of the Channel, it is well known, when this blockade was declared, were so closely invested, that not a praam could venture to leave the range of their own batteries without incurring the most imminent risk of capture. The French government, on the other hand, in their decree, declared this country in a state of blockade, not only

can require no illustration. It never could have been supposed that his Majesty would submit to such an injury, waiting in patient acquiescence till France might think proper to attend to the slow and feeble remonstrances of neutral states, instead of resorting immediately to steps which might check the violence of the enemy, and retort upon him the evils of his own injustice. Other powers would have had no right to complain, if, in consequence of this unparalleled aggression, the King had proceeded immediately to declare *all the countries occupied by the enemy in a state of blockade, and to prohibit all trade in the produce of these countries*; for, as the French decree itself expresses it, the law of nature justifies the employment against our enemies of the same arms which

without making any attempt to invest it, but without being able to send out a single vessel to endanger the neutral vessels who might attempt to violate the blockade. Therein lay the difference, the vital difference, between the proceedings of the two countries: the British government declared coasts and rivers blockaded when their maritime force was so great, and so stationed, that the enemy themselves evinced their sense of the reality of the investment by never venturing to leave their harbours; the French declared an imaginary blockade on the seas, and acted upon it in their condemnations on land, when they not only had not a single vessel at sea to maintain it, and when their enemies were insulting them daily in their very harbours. Such a proceeding was as absurd as if England, without having a soldier on the Continent, were to declare Bergen-op-Zoom or Lille in a state of blockade, and act upon this order by seizing all goods belonging to citizens of those towns, wherever she could find them in neutral bottoms on the high seas.

“But it is said the neutral nations did not acquiesce in these decrees, and therefore we were not justified in retaliating in such a way as would affect their interests. Where, then, did they resist? What followed the Berlin decree? Did the three nations whom the decree materially affected—Denmark, Portugal, and America—either remonstrate or take up arms to compel its repeal? Not one of them did so. The Danish government, indeed, complained in strong terms of the British order of 7th January 1807, but were completely silent on the previous

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L.
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21.
Acquies-
cence of the
neutrals in
the Berlin
decree.

he himself makes use of. If third parties suffer from these measures, their demands for redress must be directed *against that country which first violates the established usages of war, and the rights of neutral states*. Neutrality, properly considered, does not consist in taking advantage for the neutral's profit of every situation between the belligerents, whereby enrolment may be made, but in observing a strict and honest impartiality, so as not to afford advantage in the war to either, and particularly in so far restraining its trade to what it had ordinarily been in time of peace, as to prevent one belligerent escaping the effect of the other's hostilities.”—LORD HOWICK's *Letter to Mr RIST, 17th March 1807*—*Parl. Deb.* x. 403, 407.

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1807.

and far stronger Berlin decree of 21st November 1806, to obviate which alone it was issued. This temper savoured pretty strongly of the principle of the armed neutrality, which it has ever been the anxious wish of the Danish government to establish as the general law of the seas. Portugal was not to be blamed, because she had no force at her command to make any resistance; and accordingly the port of Lisbon was notoriously the *entrepot* for violating our orders of 7th January, and restoring to the enemy, under neutral colours, all the advantages of a coasting trade. But America was completely independent of France; and has she done anything to proclaim her repugnance to the French decree? When the corresponding decree of the French Directory was issued in 1798, it was noticed in the President's speech as highly injurious to the interests of the United States, and such as could not be allowed to exist without subverting the independence of their country. What has America now done in relation to the Berlin decree? Nothing; and that, too, although Napoleon himself announced his resolution to make no distinction between the United States and other neutrals in this particular, and acted upon this resolution in the Spanish decree issued on the 17th February, which contained no exception whatever in favour of the Transatlantic states. Having acquiesced in the violation of the law of nations in favour of one belligerent, America is bound, if she would preserve her neutral character, to show a similar forbearance in regard to the other.

22.
Napoleon's
policy in his
decrees.

"But it is said these orders are injurious to ourselves, even more than to our enemies, and that they exclude us from a lucrative commerce we otherwise might have carried on in neutral bottoms, either by connivance or licenses with our enemies. Let it be recollected, however, that when these orders were issued, we were excluded from every harbour of Europe except Sweden and Sicily; and these sufficed for what trade we could

have carried on with the Continental states, or what we can have lost by our retaliatory orders. It is in vain to pretend that these decrees were never meant to be acted upon by Buonaparte, and that, but for our Orders in Council, they would have sunk into oblivion. Such a dereliction of a great object of settled policy is entirely at variance with the known character of the French Emperor, and his profound hostility to this country, the ruling principle of his life. It is contradicted by every newspaper, which, before the orders were issued, were full of the account of the seizure of English goods in every quarter of Europe; and by his unvarying state policy, which in every pacification, and especially at Tilsit, made the rigorous exclusion of British goods the first step towards an accommodation."¹

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1807.

¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 666, 673.

Upon a division, both Houses supported ministers; the Upper by a majority of 127 to 61; the Lower by 214 to 94.²

² Parl. Deb.
x. 684, 976.

In endeavouring, at the distance of five-and-thirty years, to form an impartial opinion on this most important subject, it must at once strike the most cursory observer, that the grounds on which this question was debated in the British parliament, were not those on which its merits really rested, or on which they were placed by Napoleon at the time, and have been since argued by the Continental historians. On both sides in England it was assumed that France was the first aggressor by the Berlin decree, and that the only question was, whether the Orders in Council exceeded the just measure of retaliation, or were calculated to produce more benefit or injury to this country? Considered in this view, it seems impossible to deny that they were at least justifiable in point of legal principle, whatever they may have been with reference to political expedience. The able argument of Lord Howick to the Danish minister is unanswerable as to this point.³ If an enemy adopts a new and unheard-of mode of warfare, which

23.
Reflections
on this de-
bate, and on
the justice of
the Orders
in Council.

³ *Ante*, c. 1.
§ 18, note.

CHAP.
L.

1807.

affects alike its opponent and neutral states, and they submit without resistance to this novel species of hostility, either from a feeling of terror or a desire of profit, they necessarily come under obligation to be equally passive in regard to the measures of retaliation which the party so assailed may think it necessary to adopt. If they act otherwise, they lose the character of neutrality, and become the disguised, but often the most effective and the most valuable, allies of the innovating belligerent.

24.
Which party
was the
aggressor?

But was the Berlin decree the origin of the commercial warfare? or was it merely, as Napoleon and the French writers assert, a retaliation upon England, by the only means at the disposal of the French Emperor, for the new and illegal species of warfare which, in the pride of irresistible maritime strength, its government had thought fit to adopt? That is the point upon which the whole question—so far as the legality of the measures in question is concerned—really depends; and yet, though put prominently forward by Napoleon, it was scarcely touched on by either party in the British parliament. Nor is it difficult to see to what cause this extraordinary circumstance was owing. Both the great parties which divide that assembly were desirous of avoiding that question. The Whigs did so because the measure complained of by Napoleon, and on which the Berlin decree was justified by the French government, had been mainly adopted by Mr Fox, and subsequently extended by Lord Howick; the Tories, because they were unwilling to cast any doubt on the exercise of maritime powers, in their opinion of essential importance to this country, and which gave them the great advantage of having their political adversaries necessarily compelled to support the general principle on which the measures in question had been founded.

History, however, must disregard all these temporary considerations, and in good faith approach the question,

whether, in this great controversy, England or France was the real aggressor. And on this point, as on most others in human affairs, where angry passions have been strongly excited, it will probably be found that there were faults on both sides. Unquestionably the most flagrant violation of the law of nations was committed by Napoleon ; as, without having a ship on the ocean, or a single harbour of England invested, he took upon himself to declare the whole British islands in a state of blockade—a proceeding similar to what it would have been had England proclaimed a strict blockade with her men-of-war of Strassburg or Magdeburg. Most certainly also the resolution of the French Emperor to reduce England by means of a Continental System, had been formed long before the proclaiming the blockade of the French coasts in April 1806, by Mr Fox ; inasmuch as it had been announced and acted upon eight years before, on occasion of the conquest of Leghorn, and had formed the first condition of his pacification with every maritime state since that period. But still the British historian must lament that the government of this country had given him so plausible a ground for representing his measures as retaliatory only, by decreeing, in May 1806, the blockade of the whole French coasts of the Channel. True, this was something more than a mere paper blockade ; true, it was supported by the greatest maritime force in existence ; true, it was so effective that not a French ship of war could venture, without imminent risk, out of the protection of their batteries. Still, the declaration of a whole coast, several hundred miles in length, in a state of blockade, was a stretch unusual in war, and one which should, in an especial manner, have been avoided in a contest with an antagonist so unscrupulous in the retaliatory measures which he resorted to, and so dexterous at turning any illegal act to good account, as the French Emperor.

CHAP.
L.
1807.
25.
Comparative blame attaching to each party.

In regard to the policy of the Orders in Council, there

CHAP.
L.

1807.

26.

Reflections
on the policy
of the Orders
in Council.

is perhaps less difficulty in forming a decided opinion. It was foretold at the time, what subsequent experience has since abundantly verified, that, in the mutual attempt to starve each other out, the manufacturing state, the commercial emporium, would of necessity be more exposed to suffering than the widespread circle of nations with whom she carried on mercantile transactions; on the same principle on which a besieged town must, in the end, be always reduced by the concentric fire of a skilful assailant. The ruin and suffering on the one side is accumulated on a single spot, or within a narrow compass; on the other it is spread over an extensive surface. The sum-total of distress may be, and probably will be, equal on both sides: but how wide the difference between the garrison which sustains it all on a single breach, or in a few hospitals, and the army without, which repairs its losses by the resources of a great empire! Sound policy, therefore, recommended, on the commencement of this novel and dangerous species of hostility, the adoption of a system on the part of Great Britain which should bind more closely the cords which united her to the few remaining neutrals of the world; and which, by opening up new markets for her produce in states beyond the reach of the French Emperor, might enable her to bid defiance to the accumulated hostility of all the nations who were subject to his control. The very reverse of all this was the consequence of the Orders in Council, and thence the chief part of the national suffering in Great Britain during the latter years of the war. It is worthy of observation that the able argument of Lords Grenville and Howick on the inexpediency of the Orders in Council, as tending to exclude British industry out of the markets opened by the activity and skill of neutral traders, received no sort of answer on the part of administration. Nor, indeed, could it do so; for it was obvious that any satisfactory reply was impossible. This important subject, however, will more properly come under

consideration in a subsequent volume, when the practical operation of the Continental System and the Orders in Council for several years is to be developed ; and the able arguments on the part of the English Opposition are recounted, which, together with the multiplied complaints of the neutral powers, and the abandonment of the Continental System by Napoleon, at length brought about their repeal.

There is, however, one measure on the part of the British government connected with commercial transactions, on which, from the very outset, a decided opinion may be hazarded. This is the bill introduced by Mr Perceval, and which passed both houses of parliament,* for prohibiting the exportation of Peruvian bark to the countries occupied by the French troops, unless they took with it a certain quantity of British produce or manufactures. This was a stretch of hostility unworthy the character of England, and derogatory to the noble attitude she had maintained throughout the war. No excess of intemperance on the part of the enemy, no measures on their side, how violent soever, should have betrayed the British government into such a measure, which made war, not on the French Emperor, but on the sick and wounded in his hospitals. How much more dignified, as well as politic, was the conduct of the Duke of York in 1794, who, when the French Committee of Public Salvation had enjoined their troops to give no quarter, issued the noble proclamation already noticed,† which commanded the British soldiers to deviate in no degree from the usages of civilised warfare. But such was the exasperation now produced on both sides by the long continuance and desperate character of the contest, that the feelings of generosity and the dictates of prudence were alike forgotten, and an overwhelming,¹ and in some instances mistaken feeling of

CHAP.
L.
1807.

27.
Jesuit's
Bark Bill
in England.
April 7,
1808.

¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 1323,
1168-70.

* In the Lords, by a majority of 110 to 44 ; in the Commons, by 92 to 29.—*Parl. Deb.* x. 1170 and 1325.

† *Ante*, Chap. xvi. § 56, note.

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L.

1807.

28.

Vast ultimate effects
of the Continental
System.

state necessity, led men to commit many actions foreign alike to their usual principles and their previous conduct.

Long as the preceding disquisition on the Continental System and the Orders in Council has been, it will not, to those who consider the importance of the subject, appear misplaced. It relates to the ruling principle, the grand object of Napoleon's life ; one which he pursued with a degree of perseverance with which no other object was followed, and which, by imposing on him the necessity of general obedience, left him no other alternative but universal empire or total ruin. As such it is closely linked with the attack on Spain and Portugal, and the long-continued carnage of the Peninsular war ; the seizure of the Roman States, and incorporation of the Ecclesiastical dominions with his own by the successor of Charlemagne ; the incorporation of the ephemeral kingdom of Holland with the great empire ; in fine, the grand invasion of Russia in 1812, and the unspeakable horrors of the Moscow campaign. In the history of Napoleon, more perhaps than that of any other man that ever existed, the close connexion between one criminal act and another, and the irresistible force of the moral law by which the audacious in wickedness are impelled from one deed of darkness to those which succeed it, till a just retribution awaits them in the natural consequences of their own iniquities, is clearly evinced. The lustre of his actions, the bright effulgence of his glory, has shed an imperishable light over every step of his eventful career ; and that mysterious connexion between crime and punishment, which in most men is concealed by the obscurity of their lives, and can only be guessed at from the result, or believed from the moral laws of the universe, is there set forth, link by link, in the brightest and most luminous colours.* The grandeur of his views, the capacity of his

* "Quanto vita illius præclarior ita socordia flagitiosior est. Et profecto ita se res habet, majorum gloria posteris lumen est, neque bona neque mala eorum in occulto patitur."—SALLUST, *Bell. Jugurth.*

intellect, preclude the idea of any cause having co-operated in his fall but the universal and irresistible laws of nature; and the first genius and greatest captain of modern times was subjected to the most memorable reverse, as if to demonstrate the utter inability of the greatest human strength to combat the simple law which brings upon the impassioned prodigal the consequence of his actions.

CHAP.
L.
1807.

It is observed by Dr Johnson, that no man ever rose to supreme power among men, in whom great qualities were not combined with certain meannesses which would be deemed inconceivable in ordinary men. Never was the truth of this singular but just remark more clearly evinced than by Napoleon on this great subject of the Continental System. While the humbling of England was the first object of his life from this period—while it was the secret key to all his negotiations, all his wars, and all his conquests—while, to enforce its rigorous execution, he put all the forces of Christendom in motion, and hurled the strength of the South in desperate fury against the power of the North, he himself was the first to set the example of the evasion of his own decrees, and, for a temporary profit to himself, to establish a system which in a great degree subverted the whole objects for which these mighty risks and sacrifices were undergone. Many months had not elapsed after the publication of the Berlin decree, before it was discovered that a lucrative source of revenue might be opened up by granting, at exorbitant prices, licenses to import British colonial produce and manufactures; and though this was done under the obligation of exporting French or Continental produce to an equal amount, this condition soon became elusory. Old silks, satins, and velvets, which had completely gone out of fashion, were bought up at fictitious prices; and, when the vessels which took them on board were clear of the French coasts, they were thrown into the sea, and rich cargoes of English goods brought back in return.

29.
Introduc-
tion of the
system of
licenses.

CHAP.

L.

1807.

Such was the exorbitant rates at which these were sold, that they yielded a very handsome profit to the merchants, after paying an enormous ransom to the Emperor for the licenses, and defraying the cost of all the French goods which were lost to give a colour to the transaction. British manufactures and colonial produce rose to an extravagant price; and, as a natural consequence, they became the fashion, and the object of universal desire. A pair of cotton stockings were sold for six or seven shillings, and worn by ladies, and in dress, in preference to the finest silk; sugar was soon five shillings, coffee ten shillings a-pound. These enormous prices excited the cupidity alike of those who were engaged in promoting, and those whose duty it was to repress the contraband traffic; the vast profits of such cargoes as could be sold on any terms, compensated the loss of several in the perilous undertaking; and fiscal corruption, taking example from the open sale of licenses at the Tuileries, seized every opportunity of realising a temporary profit from the sufferings of the people.¹*

¹ Bour. vii.
232, 237.

30.

Evasion of
the decrees
on both sides
by the vast
extension of
this system.

England was not slow in following the example thus set by the French Emperor. Even more dependent than her great antagonist on the disposal of the national produce, the British government gladly availed themselves of a system which promised to mitigate, in so important a particular, the severity of the Continental blockade, and

* The following instance will illustrate the mode in which the love of gain, in all the imperial functionaries, from the highest to the lowest, counteracted all the state objects of the Berlin Decree. The English, in the summer of 1707, had made themselves masters of Heligoland, from whence enormous quantities of British produce were smuggled into Holstein, whence again they were conveyed, at a charge of from 33 to 40 per cent, within the French custom-house line. This regular traffic being well known to the imperial authorities, and probably secretly connived at by them for a share of its enormous profits, Bourrienne, then the French resident at Hamburg, represented to Napoleon that he had much better at once authorise the trade on these terms, and realise for himself this contraband profit. Napoleon adopted the proposal, and in consequence 60,000,000 francs' worth of English produce (£2,400,000) was in 1811 imported openly into that town alone, at a profit of 33 per cent to the Emperor! The same system was soon after adopted in Prussia: but notwithstanding this relaxation, the legions of douaniers and coast-guards who were quartered on the country were so prodigious that they were of necessity in part lodged in the

restore, under the safeguard of imperial licenses, the wonted encouragement of European wealth to British industry. Thence arose a system on both sides, the most extraordinary and inconsistent that ever existed upon earth. While the two governments were daily carrying on their commercial warfare with increased virulence; while Napoleon was denouncing the punishment of *death* against every government functionary who should connive in any way at the introduction of British merchandise,* and consigning to the flames all the bales of English manufactures that could be discovered by fiscal cupidity in all the extensive dominions subjected to his control; while these terrible severities were carried into rigorous execution wherever his influence reached, and piles of British goods were frequently burnt in the public market-places of all the chief Continental cities, and unhappy wretches shot† for conniving at the lucrative contraband traffic in the forbidden articles; while the English Court of Admiralty was daily condemning merchant vessels which had contravened the Orders in Council, and issuing the strictest injunctions to its cruisers to carry them into full execution; both governments were the first to set the example of the open and undisguised violation of the very decrees to which they required such implicit obedience in others. British licenses were openly sold at the public offices in London, and became the

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L.
1807.

Nov. 18,
1810.

Aug. 27,
1810.

public prisons and hospitals, and the unhappy captives and patients crowded into confined and unhealthy corners.—See BOURRIENNE, vii. 237, 238, 240.

* The Imperial Decree, November 18, 1810, created provost-marsbals for the summary punishment of all custom-house officers, carriers, coach-guards, tide-waiters, and others engaged in repressing illicit commerce, and authorised them to pronounce and carry into instant execution the most severe and infamous punishments, including death, without appeal or respite of any kind.—*Moniteur*, 18th Nov. 1810, and MONTGAILLARD, vii. 54.

† At Hamburg, in 1811, under the government of Davoust, an unhappy father of a family was shot for having introduced into his house a little sugar-loaf, of which his family stood in need; and at that very moment, perhaps, Napoleon was signing a license for the importation of a million such loaves. Smuggling on a small scale was punished with death, and the government carried it on upon the greatest scale; the same regulations filled the European prisons with victims and the imperial coffers with riches.—BOURRIENNE, vii. 233, 234.

CHAP.
L.

1807.

July 25,
1810.

¹ Mart. Sup.
i. 512.

vehicles of an immense commerce with the Continent: and Napoleon at length carried the system of authorising this illicit traffic to such a height, that by a decree issued from Antwerp in July 1810, it was expressly declared, "Subsequent to the 1st August no vessel shall issue from any of our ports, bound for any foreign port, without being furnished with a license, *signed with our own hand*."¹ Thus the Continental System, and the retaliatory measure of the Orders in Council, were mutually abandoned by the governments on both sides, though obedience to them was rigorously exacted as the first of public duties from their subjects. The whole prohibitions of the Orders in Council disappeared before the magic of a writing from Downing Street; and the boasted *grande pensée* of Napoleon degenerated into a mere pretext for exacting, under the name of licenses, an immense annual profit for the behoof of the great Imperial Smuggler in the Tuileries.

31.
Great effects
of this sys-
tem in open-
ing up new
markets for
British in-
dustry.

To such a height was this practice carried by the French Emperor, that it opened up new channels of commerce to British industry, quite equal, on the continent of Europe, to those his decree had destroyed; and the suffering experienced in England during the continuance of the Continental System was almost entirely owing, not to this Berlin decree, but to the loss of the great North American market, which the Orders in Council ultimately closed against British industry. Thus, in this the greatest measure of his life, on which he staked his influence, his fame, his throne, the mighty intellect of Napoleon was governed by the same regard to inferior interests which prompted the Dutch, in former times, to sell ammunition and provisions at an exorbitant rate to the inhabitants of a town besieged by their armies: resolved, at all events, to make gain by their hostilities, and if they could not reduce their enemies to subjection, at least realise a usurious profit from their necessities. To such a length did the license system proceed under the Imperial government, that it constituted a principal

source of the private revenue of the Emperor; and we have the authority of Napoleon himself for the assertion, that the treasure thus accumulated, in hard specie, in the vaults of the Tuileries, amounted, at the opening of the Russian war in 1812, to the enormous and unprecedented sum of four hundred million francs, or above sixteen millions sterling.^{1*}

CHAP.
L.
1807.

¹ Las Cas.
iv. 115.

The return of Napoleon to Paris, after the glorious termination of the Polish campaign, diffused a universal enchantment. Never, since the commencement of the Revolution, had the triumph of their arms been so glorious, and never had the French people such universal cause for exultation. No commercial crisis had brought the treasury to the brink of ruin, as at the close of the campaign of Austerlitz; no gloomy presentiments of a future desperate war in the north, as at Jena, alloyed the buoyancy of their present transports. The public funds had risen to an unparalleled degree. The 5 per cents, which were at 42 on Napoleon's seizure of power in 1797, and which his regular government soon raised to 60, and the victory of Austerlitz to 70, now reached the unprecedented height of 93. Public confidence was restored as if by enchantment. The great contest appeared to be over: the forces of the south and the north had been brought into collision, and the latter had been discomfited; the strength of Russia, instead of an inveterate antagonist, had been converted into the firmest support of the French empire; and, emerging from all

32.
Universal
joy at Napo-
leon's return
to Paris.
July 27.

* The accounts and details of this immense treasure were all entered in a little book kept by the Emperor's private treasurer, and no part of them appeared in the public accounts of the nation or the armies. The greater part of it was drawn out and applied to the necessities of the state during the disasters of 1813 and 1814; and in this resource is to be found one great cause of the stand made by him against the forces of combined Europe in those memorable years. As the expenses of the state always exceeded the income under Napoleon's government, and the contributions levied by the armies, how vast soever, were all absorbed in the cost of their maintenance, the secret fund must have been chiefly, if not entirely, realised from the sale of licenses, and its great amount furnishes an index to the extent to which that traffic was carried.—See LAS CASES, iv. 115.

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L.

1807.

the gloom and darkness of a Polish winter, the star of Napoleon again appeared resplendent in the zenith. His standards had been advanced in triumph to the Niemen; the strength of Prussia was to all appearance irrevocably broken; Austria had been throughout overawed, Russia at last defeated. No power of the Continent seemed to be longer capable of withstanding the French Emperor; for the forces of Sweden, far removed from the theatre of European strife, would soon, it was foreseen, be compelled to yield to the domineering influence of Alexander. England alone maintained, with unconquerable resolution, the maritime contest: but the very greatness of the triumphs of the two hostile powers on their respective elements, precluded, to all appearance, the possibility of their being brought into collision; and, like land and sea monsters, the lords of the earth and the deep regarded each other with fruitless rage and impotent fury.¹

¹ Sav. iii.
Dum. xix.
138. Montg.
vi. 273.
Bign. vi.
400. Thiers,
viii. 7.

33.
Slavish
adulation of
the orators
in the Senate
and Cham-
ber of Deput-
ties.

So unprecedented a series of triumphs might have turned the heads of a nation less passionately devoted than the French to military glory, and it will excuse much in the way of flourishing declamation. But the oratorical effusions of the public bodies in France went beyond every allowable limit. Theirs was not the exultation of freemen, but the adulation of slaves; and the classical scholar recognised with pain, in their studied flowers, the well-known language of Byzantine servitude. Already it had become evident that the passions of the Revolution, withdrawn from their original objects, had become wholly centred on military aggrandisement; and that the generous glow of freedom, chilled by suffering or extinguished by disappointment, was wholly absorbed in selfish ambition—the grave in every age of durable liberty. “We cannot adequately praise your Majesty,” said Lacépède, the president of the senate; “your glory is too dazzling: those only who are placed at the distance of posterity can appreciate its immense elevation.” “The

only *éloge* worthy of the Emperor," said the president of the Court of Cassation, "is the simple narrative of his reign ; the most unadorned recital of what he has wished, thought, and executed, of their effects, past, present, and to come." "The conception," said Count de Fabre, a senator, "which the mother of Napoleon received in her bosom, could only have flowed from *Divine inspiration*." ¹

CHAP.
L.
1807.

¹ Montg. vi.
275.

Shortly after the return of the Emperor, a military spectacle of the most animating and imposing kind took place in the French capital. The Imperial Guard made its entry in state into Paris, amidst an enthusiasm and transport which can hardly be imagined by any but those who were eye-witnesses to the vehemence of the military ardour which in France had succeeded to the passions of the Revolution. A triumphal arch was erected on the road to Mayence, at a considerable distance from Paris, from which, to the capital, the way was thronged by innumerable spectators. In brilliant order and proud array the Guard marched through a double file of soldiers, by the Porte St Martin to the Tuileries, where they defiled under the new triumphal arch, in the Place Carrousel, opened for the first time on that day. There they deposited their eagles in the Palace—they piled their arms, and then passed through the gardens of the Tuileries to the Champs Elysées, when they sat down to a repast laid with ten thousand covers. The animating strains of the military bands, which made the air resound along the whole length of this magnificent procession ; the majestic aspect of the soldiers, who were almost all picked men, bronzed by service, undaunted in aspect ; the admirable discipline which they preserved, and the recollection of their recent glorious exploits, with the renown of which the world was filled, thrilled every heart with transport. In the evening the theatres were all opened gratis ; universal delirium prevailed. At the same time, gratuities of a more substantial and durable kind were

34.
Great fête
in honour of
the Grand
Army.
Nov. 25.

CHAP.
L.
1807.

bestowed on the soldiers. All arrears, besides free gifts to the amount of 18,000,000 francs, (£720,000,) were paid in cash to the army, of which the wounded obtained a triple share, and pensions from five hundred francs (£20) and upwards were permanently settled on them, which, in the case of the officers, rose in some cases to 10,000 francs (£400) a-year. It was spectacles of this heart-stirring kind, intermingled with the astonishing external triumphs which he achieved, and the desirable benefits he conferred on his followers, which gave Napoleon his magical influence over the French people, and make them still look back to his reign, notwithstanding the numberless calamities with which it was at last attended, as a brilliant spot in existence, the recollection of which obliterates all the remembrance of later times, and fixes every eye by a glow of almost insupportable brightness.¹

¹ Thib. vi.
247, 248.
Thiers, viii.
141, 142.

35.
Suppression of the
French
Tribunate.
Aug. 16.

Napoleon, seeing his advantage, took the favourable opportunity which this burst of enthusiastic feeling afforded, to eradicate the last remnants of popular institutions from the constitution. In the speech which he addressed to the legislative body on his return from Poland, he announced his intention "of simplifying and bringing to perfection the national institutions." It soon appeared what was in contemplation: the "simplifying" consisted in the destruction of the only remaining relic of popular power; the "bringing to perfection," in vesting the whole powers of legislation in a council of state, presided over by the Emperor, and composed entirely of persons paid by government, and appointed by himself.

² *Ante*, c. 29,
§§ 54-56.

It has been already mentioned,² that by the existing constitution three public bodies were required to concur in the formation of the laws: the council of state, the members of which were richly endowed, and all appointed by the Emperor; the tribunate, in which the laws were discussed and approved of, and the members of which, though also in the receipt of salaries from government, were to a certain degree dependent on popular election;³

³ Montg. vi.
277. Pelet,
150, 151.
Bign. vi.
398.

and the legislative body, which, without enjoying the privilege of debate, listened in silence to the pleadings of the orators appointed by the council of state, for the measures proposed by government, and those of the tribunate, either for or against their adoption.

But, notwithstanding the influence of the Emperor over a legislature thus in a great part appointed, and wholly paid by himself, the debates in the tribunate occasionally assumed a freedom which displeased him ; and while he was willing to allow any latitude in argument to the discussions in the council of state, addressed to himself or his confidential advisers, he could not tolerate public harangues in another assembly, calculated to arouse extraneous or controlling influence, or revive in any form the passions of the Revolution. For these reasons, he resolved on the entire suppression of the tribunate, which, having been already reduced from a hundred to fifty members, and stripped by imperial influence of its most distinguished orators, had lost much of its consideration ; and on the raising of the age requisite for admission into the legislative body from thirty to forty years, a period of life when it might be presumed that much of the fervour for political innovation would be extinguished. The previous discussion on the laws proposed by government, which alone enjoyed the power of bringing them forward, was appointed to take place in three commissions, chosen from the legislative body by the Emperor ; but their debates were not to be made public. Thus was a final blow given to popular influence in France, and the authority of the executive rendered absolute in the legislative, as it had long been in the other departments of government, just eighteen years after that influence had been established, amidst such universal transports, by the Constituent Assembly.* Knowing well the selfishness of

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36.
Reasons of
Napoleon
for that step.

* The project of extinguishing the tribunate had been long entertained by Napoleon. In the council of state, on 1st December 1803, he said—"Before many years have elapsed, it will probably be advisable to unite the tribunate to the legislative body, by transferring its powers to committees of the latter

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¹ De Stael,
Dix ans
d'Exil, 37,
38. Montg.
vi. 277, 278.
Bign. vi.
398. Pelet,
150, 153.
Thiers, viii.
76, 77.

37.
Slavish sub-
mission with
which this
change was
received in
France.

mankind, which is ever brought so prominently forward during the convulsions of a revolution, Napoleon was careful to prepare the way for this great change by every possible appliance to the interests of the members of the tribunate. They were all nominated to lucrative situations under government, as prefects, public prosecutors, or presidents; and such as could not be provided for in this way, were promoted to situations in the newly created audit-chamber. The event showed that he had not miscalculated the temper and dispositions of the popular leaders.¹

What effect did this important change, which annihilated all the objects for which the Revolution had been commenced, and restored government to a despotic form, more strict and powerful than that of the old monarchy, produce in France? Did it convulse that enthusiastic empire to its centre, and revive again the terrible democratic fervour of 1789? Did clubs reappear, and popular ambition arise from its ashes, and the stern virtue of the old patriots obliterate the more modern illusions of military glory? It did none of these things. It was hardly noticed amidst the blaze of the Emperor's triumphs; it did not excite a murmur, or awaken an expression of discontent from Calais to the Pyrenees. Numbers of pamphlets appeared on the subject, but they were all in warm and earnest commendation of the change. One would have supposed that two centuries, instead of eighteen years, had rolled over the head of the nation; that the days of Mirabeau and Danton were already forgotten;

assembly. The senate, too feebly constituted in the outset, will require some strengthening. The other legislative bodies have no consistency; none of them could secure the nation from becoming the prey of a colonel of hussars who may have four thousand men at his disposal. The only institutions which offer any security to the public safety are the senate and electoral colleges."

"The legislative body," said he, on 29th March 1806, "should be composed of individuals who, after the termination of their public services, have some private fortune to fall back upon, without the necessity of giving them a pension for their subsistence. Nevertheless, there are every year *sixty legislators discharged from the legislative body, whom you know not what to make of*: those who are not in office carry back nothing but ill-humour to the departments. I would wish to see there proprietors of a certain age, married, attached by the

that the transports of Gracchus had melted away into the servility of Constantinople. The very body which was to be annihilated was the first to lick the hand which was destroying it; if liberty arose in France amidst the tears of suffering and by the light of conflagration, it expired amidst eunuch servility and Eastern adulation.¹

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L.
1807.

¹ Montg. vi.
276, 277.
Bign. v.
397.

When the fatal decree was read in the hall of the tribunate, thunders of applause shook the walls, and Carrion Nisas, a member of that body and cousin of Cambacérès, exclaimed, "This communication has been accompanied with so many expressions of esteem and affection, on the part of our sovereign, for *his faithful subjects in the tribunate*; these assurances are of such inestimable importance, they have been brought forward with so much lustre, that I am sure, gentlemen, I am the organ of your sentiments when I propose that we should lay at the foot of the throne, as the last act of our honourable existence, an address which may impress the people with the idea that we have received the act of the senate without regret at the termination of our political existence, without disquietude for the destinies of our country, and that the sentiments of love and devotion to the monarch which animated our body, will live for ever in the breast of all its members." The address was voted by acclamation, and these sentiments found a responsive echo in the legislative assembly. Its president, Fontanes, said, in the name of the whole body, "The

38.
Servile adulation with which the change was received in the tribunate.

bond either of children or of some fortune to the public welfare. These men would come annually to Paris, would speak to the Emperor, and live in his circle, and return to their departments illuminated with the slender share of his lustre which had fallen on their heads. The public functionaries should also be members of the legislative body: *you cannot render the legislature too manageable*: if it becomes so strong as to be seized with the desire of ruling, it would destroy the executive, or be destroyed by it."—See PELET, 148, 152—an able and authentic brief record of the discussions in the council of state, at which the Emperor presided, and embodying his opinions on the most important subjects of government: of which an accurate and valuable translation has just been published by Mr Cadell at Edinburgh, executed by the author's valued friend, Captain Basil Hall.

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1807.

majesty of the national assembly is about to revive under the auspices of a great man ; these walls, which once resounded with so much clamour, were astonished at their silence, and that silence is about to terminate. Popular tempests shall no longer roll there : they will be succeeded by wise and temperate discussions. He who has enchained the demon of faction, no longer desires that voices respectful but free should be banished from these walls. Let us show ourselves worthy of such a gift : let the tribune reappear without its storms ; let truth shine there in its native lustre, mingled with the radiance of wisdom. A great prince must love its eclat : it alone can fitly illuminate his path. What has he to fear from it ? The more he is regarded, the more majestic he appears ; the more he is scrutinised, the more objects of admiration are discovered." These extravagant sallies excited no general burst of indignation ; they were silently read in the *Moniteur* ; and the tribunate, the last relic of freedom, sank unheeded into the grave.* "When the citizens," says Rousseau, "fallen into servitude, enjoy neither liberty nor the power of choice, terror and selfishness convert their suffrages into acclamations—deliberation is at an end ; every one adores in public, and execrates in private. Such was the manner in which the senate was regarded under the Roman emperors." How little did the eloquent apostle of freedom anticipate another confirmation of the same remark, from the very people whom his fervent declamations had roused to such unanimous enthusiasm in the cause of liberty !¹

The complete success of this great infringement on the only remaining popular part of the constitution, encouraged Napoleon to undertake still more decisive measures

¹ Montg. vi.
277, 280.
Bign. vi.
397, 399.

* "The change," says Bignon, "in the age of eligibility to the legislative body, and even the suppression of the tribunate, now so important in our eyes, were hardly thought of in 1807 ; and so little was public opinion regarded, that the former change was introduced by the sole authority of the Emperor, without the concurrence of any of the legislative bodies."—BIGNON, 398, 399.

against the liberties of the people. Six weeks after, an imperial decree, professing to establish the freedom of the press, in reality annihilated it, by enacting that no bookseller was to publish any work without its having previously received the sanction of the censors of the press. The same restriction had previously been imposed on journals and periodical publications; so that, from this time forward down to the fall of Napoleon, no thought could be published to the world without having first been approved by the imperial authorities. Under the active administration and vigilant police of the empire, these powers were so constantly and rigorously exercised, that not only was the whole information on political subjects or public affairs, which was permitted to reach the people, strained through the imperial filters, but all passages were expunged from every work which had a tendency, however remote, to nourish independent sentiments, or foster a feeling of discontent towards the existing government. So far was this carried, that when the Allies entered France in 1814, they found a large proportion of the inhabitants ignorant of the battle of Trafalgar. The years of the empire are an absolute blank in French literary annals in all matters relating to government, political thought, or moral sentiment. The journals were filled with nothing but the exploits of the Emperor, the treatises by which he deigned to enlighten the minds of his subjects on the affairs of state, or the adulatory addresses presented to him from all parts of his dominions. The pamphlets and periodicals of the metropolis breathed only the incense of refined flattery, or the vanity of Eastern adulation.¹

Talent in literature took no other direction but that pointed out by the imperial authorities; genius sought to distinguish itself only by new and more extravagant kinds of homage. The press, so far from being the safeguard of the people against these evils, became their *greatest promoter* by exerting all its powers on the side

CHAP.
L.

1807.

39.
Establish-
ment of a
censorship
of the press.
Sept. 27.

¹ Montg. vi.
281. De
Stael, Rév.
Franc. ii.
381.

40.
Entire pro-
stration of
literature
and the
press.

CHAP.
L.
1807.

of despotism. Whoever attentively considers the situation of France, the most enlightened monarchy of Europe, and so recently teeming with democratic fervour, during the ten years of the imperial government, will at once perceive the groundless nature of the common doctrine, that the press is, under all circumstances, the bulwark of liberty, and that despotism is impossible where it exists. They will rather concur in the opinion of Madame de Staël, that the effect which this mighty instrument produces is entirely dependent on the power which gains possession of its resources ; that it is only in a peculiar state of the public mind, and when a certain balance exists between political parties, that it is exerted beneficially on the side of freedom, and that at other periods, or under the influence of more corrupted feelings, it may become the instrument of the most immovable popular or imperial despotism which ever was riveted upon mankind.¹*

¹ Montg. vi.
282. De
Staël, Rév.
Fran. ii.
381, 382.

Identity of
the Imperial
despotism of
Napoleon,
and the de-
mocratic
tyranny of
America.

* Observe the picture of the identity of the effects of the press under the imperial despotism of Napoleon, and the democratic tyranny of the majority in the American Union, as delineated by two master hands, Madame de Staël and M. de Tocqueville.—“This police, for which we cannot find terms adequately contemptuous, was the instrument which Buonaparte made use of to direct public opinion in France; and in truth, when there is no such thing as the freedom of the press, and the censors of the press, not confining themselves to erasing, dictate to writers of every description the opinions they are to advance on every subject of politics, religion, manners, books, and individual character, it may be conceived into what state a nation must fall which has no other nutriment for its thoughts but such as a despotic authority permits. It is not surprising, therefore, that French literature and criticism descended to the lowest point during the empire. The restrictions on the press were far less severe under Louis XIV. than under Napoleon. The profound saying, ‘Paper will receive anything,’ never received a more appalling illustration. The journals were filled only with addresses to the Emperor, with his journeys, those of the princes and princesses of his family, the etiquettes and presentations at court. They discovered the art of being tame and lifeless at the epoch of the world’s overturn; and, but for the official bulletins which from time to time let us know that half the world was conquered, one might have believed that the age was one only of roses and flowers, and sought in vain for words except those which the ruling powers let fall on their prostrate subjects. A few courageous individuals published books without the censorship of the press, and what was the consequence? They were prosecuted, the impression seized, the authors banished, or shot like unhappy Palm. These terrible examples spread such a general terror, that submission became universal. Of all the grievances which the slavery of the press pro-

Under the combined influence of the entire suppression of the liberty of the press, and the unwearied activity of imperial censors and police agents, every approach even to a free discussion on public affairs, or the principles either of government or social prosperity, was stifled in France and its dependent monarchies; and one half of Europe, in the opening of the nineteenth century, and at the close of a struggle for extended privileges and universal information, was brought back to a darkness more profound than that of the middle ages. Never did papal ambition draw so close the fetters on human thought as imperial France did; the Jesuits were not such active agents in the extension of spiritual, as the police were in the establishment of temporal power. Madame de Stael and Madame Récamier were illustrious instances that the jealousy of the imperial government could not be relaxed even by the most brilliant or captivating qualities of the other sex. The former, long the object of Napoleon's

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L.
1807.
41.
Banishment
of Madame
de Stael.

duced perhaps, the most bitter was the daily spectacle of those we held most dear insulted or reviled in the journals or works published by authority, without the possibility of making a reply, over half of Europe."—DE STAEL, *Rév. Franç.* ii. 377, 383.

So far Madame de Stael, in painting the perversion of the press to the purposes of despotism in imperial France; mark now the picture of its operation in America, under the unrestrained sway of a numerical majority of electors. "Among the immense crowd," says 'Tocqueville, "who, in the United States, take to the career of politics, I have met with few men who possess that independence of thought, that manly candour which characterised the Americans in their war of independence. You would say, on the contrary, that *all their minds are formed on the same model*, so exactly do they adopt the same opinions. I have sometimes met with true patriotism among the people, but rarely among their rulers. This is easily explained—supreme power ever corrupts and depraves its servants before it has irrevocably tainted its possessors. The courtiers in America, indeed, do not say, "Sire! Your Majesty!" Mighty difference! But they speak without intermission of the natural intelligence of their many-headed sovereign; they attribute to him every virtue and capacity under heaven; they do not give him their wives and daughters to make his mistresses—but, by sacrificing their opinions, they prostitute themselves to his service. What revolts the mind of a European in America, is not the extreme liberty which prevails, but the slender guarantee which exists against tyranny. When a man or a party suffers in the United States from injustice on the part of the majority, to whom is he to apply for redress? To public opinion? It is formed by the majority. To the legislative body? It is elected by the majority. To a jury? It is the judicial committee of the majority. To the executive power? It is appointed

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1807.

hostility, from the vigour of her understanding and the fearlessness of her conduct, was at first banished forty leagues from Paris, then confined to her chateau on the Lake of Geneva, where she dwelt many years, seeking in vain, in the discharge of every filial duty to her venerable father, to console herself for the loss of the brilliant intellectual society of Paris. At length the rigour of the espionage became such, that she fled in disguise through the Tyrol to Vienna; and, hunted out thence by the French agents, continued her route through Poland into Muscovy, where she arrived shortly before the invasion of 1812, happy to find in the dominions of the imperial autocrat that freedom which old Europe could no longer afford. Her brilliant work on Germany was seized by the orders of the police and consigned to the flames; and France owes the preservation of one of the brightest jewels in her literary coronet to the fortuitous concealment of one copy from the myrmidons of Savary. The world has no cause to regret the severity of Napoleon to the illustrious exile, whatever his biographer may have; ¹ for to it we owe the *Dix Années d'Exil*, the most admir-

¹ *Dix Ann. d'Exil*, 74, 75, and *Rév. Fran.* ii. 309.

by the majority, and is the mere executor of its wishes. How cruel or unjust soever may be the stroke which injures you, redress is impossible, and submission unavoidable. I know no country in which there is so little true independence of mind and freedom of discussion as in America. The majority raises such formidable barriers to liberty of opinion, that it is impossible to pass them; within them an author may write whatever he pleases, but he will repent it if he ever step beyond them. In democratic states, organised on the principles of the American republic, the authority of the majority is so absolute, so irresistible, that a man must give up his rights as a citizen, and almost abjure his quality as a human being, if he means to stray from the track which it lays down. If ever the free institutions of America are destroyed, that event will arise from the unlimited tyranny of the majority; anarchy will be the result, but it will have been brought about by despotism." To the same purpose is the opinion of President Jefferson, the ablest advocate for democratic principles that ever appeared in the United States:—"The executive power," says he, "is not the chief danger to be feared; the tyranny of the legislature is the danger most to be feared." What testimonies from such minds, to the identity of the effect so long observed by political writers, as produced by unrestrained power, whether in an absolute despot or an irresponsible numerical majority; and of the necessity of establishing the foundations of the breakwater which is to curb the force of either imperial or democratic despotism in another element than that by which its own waves are agitated! And how remarkable a confirmation of

able of her moral sketches ; the three volumes on Germany, the most eloquent of her critical dissertations ; and the profound views on the British constitution, with which she has enriched her great work on the French Revolution.

CHAP.
L.
1807.

Madame Récamier shared the enmity of Napoleon from her generous attention to her persecuted friend. She had resisted his advances of an amorous kind, and this was an offence not to be forgiven. Her friendship for Madame de Stael was the pretence for this severity. A transient visit of a few days to Coppet was assigned as a reason for including her also in the sentence of banishment.¹ The graces which had won the admiration of all Europe, and which had disdained the advances of the Emperor himself, were consigned, in a distant province, to the privacy of rural retirement ; and the ruler of the East and West deemed himself insecure on the throne of Charlemagne, unless the finest genius then in Europe, and the most beautiful woman in France, were exiled from his dominions.² * The arrival of her friend, Madame Récamier, at the place of banishment of Madame de

42.
And of
Madame
Récamier.

¹ D'Abr.
xiii. 124.

² De Stael,
Dix Ann.
d'Exil, 74,
75, 177, 191.
Id. Rév.
Fran. ii.
309.

the profound remark long ago made by Aristotle, that courtiers and demagogues not only bear a strong resemblance to each other, but are in fact *the same men*, varying only in the external character according to the ruling power which they severally worship !—See TOCQUEVILLE, *De l'Amérique*, ii. 145, 146, 156, 157 ; JEFFERSON'S *Correspondence*, iv. 452 : and ARISTOTLE, *De Pol.* c. 27.

* Napoleon's jealousy of Madame Récamier's beauty and influence carried him to still more unjustifiable lengths. Her husband, who was a great banker in Paris, became bankrupt, and he seriously proposed in the council of state, that *she should be subjected to a joint responsibility with him for the debts of the bank* ! “ I am of opinion,” said he, “ that in case of bankruptcy, the wife should be deprived of all her conjugal rights ; because our manners sanction the principle, that a wife must follow the fortune of her husband ; and that would deprive her of all inducement to make him continue his extravagancies.” “ The class of bankers,” says Pelet, the impartial reporter of these important debates, “ always excited the Emperor's jealousy, because they were an independent class who had no need of the government, while the government often stood in need of their assistance. Besides that, in wishing to render Madame Récamier responsible for her husband's debts, he was actuated by a special spite against that celebrated lady. The little court with which she was surrounded, on account of her incomparable beauty, *excited his jealousy, as much as the talents of Madame de Stael*. Elevated as he was above all others, he could not see without pain, that *she shared with him the public attention*. He was more

CHAP.
L.

1807.

Stael, proved the greatest alleviation of the ennui under which the latter laboured during her exile from Paris. It was said to be "the alliance of Genius and Beauty."

43.
The judges
are rendered
removable
at pleasure.
Oct. 12.

Another decree of the senate soon after inflicted a mortal wound on the independence of the judicial establishment, by enacting that their commissions for life should not be delivered to them till after five years' previous service, and then only on the condition that their conduct had been entirely satisfactory to the Emperor. He reserved to himself the exclusive power of judging on the continuance or dismissal of every judicial functionary, from the highest to the lowest, with the aid of commissioners, appointed and exclusively directed by himself. From this time the independence of the bench over the whole French empire was totally destroyed, and practically every judge held his office during the pleasure merely of the Emperor. Several instances of arbitrary dismissal of judges, if they pronounced decrees disagreeable to government, took place; but they were less frequent than might have been expected, from the universal spirit of slavish submission which seized the magistrates of every grade, and rendered them not merely, during the whole reign of Napoleon, the servile instruments of his will, but led them formally, after his fall, to invoke the re-establishment of despotic power.¹

¹ Montg. vi.
282, 283.

44.
Severe de-
crees against
any conniv-
ance at
English
commerce.
Jan. 11,
1808.

Following up the same arbitrary system, it was enacted by an imperial decree on 11th January 1808, that not only should every seaman or passenger on board a vessel arriving in any harbour of France, who should declare that it came from an English harbour, or had been searched by English cruisers, receive a third of the value of the vessel or cargo, but that every public functionary who irritated by it than he would have been by a decided opposition to his government. Even the celebrity of M. Gall, and his well-known system of craniology, excited his jealousy; he could not endure that he should be more talked of than himself."—PELET, *Opinions de Napoléon dans le Conseil d'Etat*, 261. The well-known story told in Boswell of Goldsmith, at Antwerp, taking the pet, because two handsome young ladies at the window of the inn excited more attention than himself, is nothing to this.—See BOSWELL'S *Johnson*.

should connive in the slightest degree at the infringement of any of the decrees against English commerce, should be brought before the criminal court of the department of the Seine, which was erected into a tribunal for that special purpose, and indicted for *high treason*. Bales of English goods, of great value, were publicly burned in all the chief cities of the countries which directly or indirectly acknowledged the French influence; and at the moment that the unhappy owners were begging from the executioners a few shreds which the flames had spared, to cover their children from the inclemency of the weather, the Emperor, by means of licenses, was daily carrying on an extensive commerce in these very articles, and amassing enormous sums at the Tuileries, by the sale of the right to deal in those goods, the traffic in which brought death to any inferior functionary.¹

CHAP.
L.
1807.

¹ Montg. vi.
299. De
Stael, Rév.
Fran. ii.
251.

Meanwhile, the thirst for public employment in France, always great among that energetic and aspiring people, rose to a perfect mania. The energy of the Revolution, the ardent passion for individual elevation which constituted its secret but main spring, was now wholly turned into that channel; and by a change of circumstances, remarkable indeed, but not unnatural, the same desire which, when revolutionary elevation was practicable, convulsed all the nation with democratic fervour, now that court favour was the only avenue to promotion, led to the extremity of oriental obsequiousness. The prefects, who had the patronage of all the numerous government offices within their jurisdiction, held a court, and exercised an influence equal to that of petty sovereigns; the ministers of state were besieged with innumerable applications for every office that fell vacant; the Emperor himself received hundreds of petitions for every situation in his gift, from the highest to the lowest. All ranks, classes, and parties concurred in this selfish struggle. The old noblesse, with a few honourable exceptions, vied with each other for the most trifling appointments in the

45.
Universal
thirst for
public em-
ployment in
France.

CHAP.
L.

1807.

imperial antechambers; the patriots of 1789 burned with ardour to share in the advantage of the imperial government; even such of the blood-stained Jacobins of 1793 as the guillotine and subsequent proscriptions had spared, sank down into obscure pamphleteers or functionaries in the employment of the despot who had extinguished their extravagant chimeras.* "All the terrorists," says Sir James Mackintosh, "took refuge under Buonaparte's authority. The more base accepted clandestine pensions or insignificant places. Barère wrote slavish paragraphs at Paris; Tallien was provided for by an obscure consulship in Spain; Fouché, one of the most atrocious of the terrorists, had been gradually formed into a good administrator under a civilised despotism."† When such was the disposition of those who had been the leading parties in the Revolution, both on the royalist and republican side, it may readily be conceived with what eagerness the rising generation, the young men who had grown up to manhood amid the blaze of Napoleon's glory, who knew of the fervour of democracy only as a hideous dream of former days, the immense mass who looked to advancement in life, and saw no hope of attaining it but in the favour of government, rushed into the same career, and how completely every feeling, down to the fall of Napoleon, was absorbed in the general desire to bask in the sunshine of imperial favour. Such was the universality and vehemence of this passion, that it superseded every other feeling, whether private, social, or political, and with the exception of a few rigid republicans, such as Carnot and Lafayette, swept before it the whole democratic principles of France.¹

The Constituent Assembly had paved the way for this great alteration by the suppression of the privileges of the nobles, and the annihilation of all provincial and

* Barère was employed in this capacity by Napoleon, and dragged out an obscure existence as a hired pamphleteer, and eulogist of the imperial government, till its fall in 1814.—*Biog. des Contemporains*, ii. 115, 116.

† MACKINTOSH'S *Works*, iii. 194.

¹ De Stael, ii. 372, 373.
Dix Ann. d'Exil, 38.
Las Cas, vii. 100, 101.

local authority, which necessarily devolved, in every branch of the administration, either on the popular assemblies or the central government: the Legislative Assembly followed it up by banishing all the clergy and landholders, and issuing the iniquitous decrees for the confiscation of their property; and the Convention put the finishing stroke by inhumanly massacring its leading members, and rendering the reparation of this injustice even to their heirs impossible, by alienating their possessions to the millions of revolutionary proprietors. It is in these frightful deeds of national injustice that we are to look for the remote but certain cause of the rapid centralisation of the subsequent governments, and the unbounded extent of the imperial authority. When Napoleon succeeded to supreme power, he found all local or subordinate sources of influence or authority closed up or annulled, and nothing remained but the central government. The people had effectually succeeded in destroying the counteracting influence of all other bodies or individuals in the state, but they had been unable to retain in their own hands the power which they had, in the first instance, erected on their ruins. Then, as ever in human affairs, the multitude found themselves incapable of self-government; and the only question really was, by whom their rulers were to be nominated. But it was soon found that such had been the corruption, selfishness, incapacity, or wickedness of the functionaries appointed by the masses, that by common consent they had been deprived, either formally or tacitly, of their power of nomination; and every appointment, without exception, in the empire, flowed from the central government.¹

Not only were the whole members of the council of state, the senate, and the legislative body, selected by the Emperor, but he had the appointment of all the officers in the army and navy, and the police, whether local or general; all the magistrates of every degree: the judges, whether supreme or inferior; all persons employed in the

CHAP.
L.

1807.

46.
Rapid progress of the system of centralisation in France.

¹ Las Cas.
vii. 101. De
Stael, ii.
372, 373.

47.
Centralisation of all power in the imperial government.

CHAP.

L.

1807.

collection of the revenue, the customs, and excise; all the ministers of the church; all the teachers of youth—all the professors in the universities, academies, and schools; all persons in the post-office, or concerned in the administration of the roads, bridges, harbours, fortresses, and cities in the empire. The Emperor skilfully availed himself of this immense patronage to flatter the vanity and feed the cupidity of the middle class who had brought about the Revolution. "The vanity," says Mackintosh,* "of that numerous, intelligent, and active part of the community—merchants, bankers, manufacturers, tradesmen, lawyers, physicians, surgeons, artists, actors, men of letters—had been humbled by the monarchy, and had triumphed in the Revolution. They rushed into the stations which the gentry, emigrant, beggared, or exiled, had filled; the whole government fell into their hands. In a country deprived of its whole original landed proprietors by the confiscations of the Revolution, bereaved of commerce and colonies by the events of the war, and almost destitute of capital or private fortunes from the preceding convulsions, these different employments constituted the only avenues to subsistence or eminence which remained to those who were either averse to, or above the rank of, manual labour or retail trade. This state of matters, incident to a people highly excited and inspired with the strongest feelings of individual ambition, alone can account for the universal passion for government employment which seized all ranks of the French nation during the latter years of the reign of Napoleon. And before we censure them as volatile and inconsistent, when we contrast this mania with the democratic fervour of 1789, we would do well to reflect whether any other people, under similar circumstances, would have remained more steadfast to their original professions; and whether both dispositions of the public mind were not, in truth, at bottom,¹ the result of the same thirst after individual

¹ Las Cas.
vii. 101. De
Stael, Rév.
Fran. ii.
372, 374.
Ib. Dix
Ann.d^e Exil,
38, 39.

* MACKINTOSH'S *Works*, iii. 189.

distinction, varying in the effect it produced according to the change in the means of obtaining elevation which the altered circumstances of society had occasioned.”*

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Napoleon seized with all his wonted ability on the extraordinary combination of circumstances which had thus in a manner thrown absolute power into his hands. “His system of government,” says Madame de Stael, “was founded on three bases—To satisfy the interests of men at the expense of their virtue; to deprave public opinion, by falsehoods or sophisms perpetually repeated from the press; and to convert the passion for freedom into that for military glory. He followed up this system with rare ability.” The Emperor himself has given us some important information on his designs, and what he had effected in this respect. “I had established,” said he, “a government the most compact, carrying on its operations with the most rapidity, and capable of the most nervous efforts of any that ever existed upon earth. And, truly, nothing less was required to triumph over the immense difficulties with which we were surrounded, and produce the marvels which we accomplished. The organisation of the prefectures, their action, and results, were alike admirable. The same impulse was given at the same instant to more than forty millions of men; and by the aid of these centres of local activity, the movement was as rapid at all the extremities as at the heart of the empire. Strangers who visited us were astonished at this system; and they never failed to attribute the immense results which were obtained to that uniformity of action pervading so great a space. Each prefect, with the authority and local patronage with which he was

48.
Policy of
the Empe-
ror as re-
gards this.

* Napoleon has left some valuable observations on this important subject. “One excuse for the boundless thirst for employments which existed under the empire,” said he, “is to be found in the misfortunes and convulsions of the Revolution. Every one was displaced; every one felt himself under the necessity of seating himself again; and it was in order to aid that feeling, and give way to that universal necessity, that I felt the propriety of endowing all the principal offices with so much riches, power, and consideration; but in time I would have changed that by the mere force of opinion.”—LAS CAS. vii. 102.

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1807. invested, was in himself a *little Emperor*; but nevertheless, as he enjoyed no force except from the central authority, owed all his lustre to official employment, and had no natural or hereditary connexion with the territory over which his dominion extended, the system had all the advantages of the feudal government, without any of its inconveniences. It was indispensable to clothe them with all that authority; I found myself made dictator by the force of circumstance; it was necessary, therefore, that all the minor authorities should be entirely dependent on and in complete harmony with the grand central moving power. The spring with which I covered the soil required a prodigious elasticity, an unbounded tension, if we would avert the strokes which were levelled at our authority. Education may subsequently effect a change; but our generation was inspired with such a thirst for power, and exercised it in so arrogant a manner, to give it the mildest name, and at the same time were so headlong in their passion to fawn upon greatness and wear the chains of slavery, that no other system of government was practicable.”¹

¹ Las Cas.
vii, 97, 99.

49.
Here estab-
lishes titles
of honour.
Principles
on which
this was
founded.

But with all his admiration for the centralised government which he had established, and of the machinery of little emperors, prefects, mayors, adjuncts, and other functionaries, by which it was carried into effect, no man knew better than Napoleon that it was not in such a system that the foundation for a durable dynasty on the throne could be laid. The system of prefects enjoying absolute power, but deriving all their consideration from transient government appointments, was in reality nothing else but the old and long-established rule of oriental pashalics, held in subjection by a vigorous sultaun; and all history told that such governments rarely descended, in the same family, to the third generation from the original founder. “An aristocracy,” says Napoleon, “*is the true, the only support of a monarchy*; without it, the state is a vessel without a rudder—a balloon in the air.

A true aristocracy, however, must be ancient ; therein consists its real force ; and that was the only thing which I could not create. Reasonable democracy will never aspire to anything more than obtaining an equal power of elevation to all. The true policy in these times was to employ the remains of the aristocracy with the forms and the spirit of democracy. Above all, it was necessary to take advantage of the ancient historic names—it was the only way to throw the halo of antiquity over our modern institutions. My designs on this point were quite formed, but I had not time to bring them to maturity. It was this,—that every lineal descendant of an old marshal or minister should be entitled at any time to get himself declared a duke by the government, upon proving that he had the requisite fortune ; every descendant of a general, or governor of a province, was to obtain the title of count upon exhibiting a similar endowment. This system would have advanced some, excited the hopes of others, awakened the emulation of all, without injuring any one ; pretty toys, it is true, but such as are indispensable for the government of men. Old and corrupted nations cannot be ruled on the same principle as simple and virtuous ages : for one, in these times, who would sacrifice all to the public good, there are thousands and millions who are influenced only by their interests, their vanity, or their enjoyments. To attempt to regenerate such a people in a day would be an act of madness. The true genius of the workman consists in making a right use of the materials which he has at his disposal, to extract good even from the elements which appear at first sight most adverse to his designs ; and therein is the real secret of the revival of titles, ribbons, and crosses. And, after all, these toys are attended with few inconveniences, and are not without some advantages. In the state of civilisation in which we are placed, they are proper to awaken the respect of the multitude, and not without influence in producing a feeling of self-respect in their owners :¹ they satisfy the

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¹ Las Cas.
v. 23, 25.

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50.

Re-establishment of hereditary titles of honour.
March 11, 1808.

vanity of the weak, without giving any just cause of offence to the strong."

Proceeding on these principles, a *senatus-consultum*, in March 1808, re-established hereditary titles of honour, under the denomination of Prince, Duke, Count, Baron, and Chevalier. The persons so ennobled were empowered to entail a certain income, under the name of *majorats*, in favour of their direct descendants. This was the first formal re-establishment of a nobility ; but Napoleon had previously, on repeated occasions, exercised the power of conferring titles on the leading persons in his government or army without any other authority than his own will ; and among others had, by a patent dated 28th May 1807, created Lefebvre Duke of Dantzic, with a hereditary succession to his son ; and all the marshals of the empire, as well as the grand officers of the imperial court, had already been created princes or dukes, shortly after the campaign of Austerlitz.¹ But these titles were all connected with foreign estates or possessions, or named after some glorious foreign exploit, and did not infringe, except indirectly, on the equality in France itself, which it had been the great object of the Revolution to establish. Now, however, this fundamental principle was openly violated ; and in the lifetime of the generation which had waded through oceans of blood to abolish these distinctions, they were re-established in greater numbers, and in a more rigid style of etiquette than ever.² There is nothing surprising, however, in this ; on the contrary, it was the natural consequence of the passions which produced the Revolution. "Napoleon's nobility," says Mackintosh, "was an institution framed to secure the triumph of all those vanities which had produced the Revolution, and to guard against the possibility of a second humiliation. It was composed of a revolutionary aristocracy, with some of the ancient nobility, compelled to lend lustre to it by accepting titles inferior to their own, with many lawyers, men of letters, merchants, &c.,

¹ *Ante*, ch. 42, § 34.

² Montg. vi. 303, 305.
Dum. xix. 231.

whom the ancient system of the French monarchy had formerly excluded from such distinction.”*

Such a stretch, coming so soon after the universal passion for equality, which, bursting forth in 1789, had since convulsed France and Europe, was of itself sufficiently remarkable; but it was rendered still more so by the speeches by which it was ushered into the legislative body. “Senators!” said Cambacérès, “know that you are no longer obscure plebeians or simple citizens. The statute which I hold in my hand confers on you the *majestic title of Count*. I myself, senators, am no longer merely the citizen Cambacérès; as are the other great dignitaries of the empire, I am a prince, your most serene highness! and my most serene person, as well as all the other holders of the great dignities of the empire, will be endowed with one of the grand-duchies reserved by the imperial decree of 30th March 1806.¹ As the son of a prince cannot, in the noble hierarchy, descend to a lower rank than that of a duke, *all our children* will enjoy that title. But the new order of things erects no impassable or invidious barrier between the citizens; every career remains open to the virtues and talents of all; the advantage which it awards to tried merit will prove no injury to that which has not yet been put to the test.” Thunders of applause shook the senate at this announcement; and that body, composed almost entirely of persons of plebeian birth, whom success in the Revolution had raised to eminence, and many of whom had voted in the Convention for the death of Louis, not only accepted with gratitude the

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L.

1807.

51.

Speeches on
the subject
in the legis-
lative body.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
42, § 34.

* These observations at once explain the cause of this change. It is a secret envy of the lustre of rank which makes men declaim against its vanity when it is beyond their reach; when they have the prospect of gaining it, they become its most strenuous supporters. Republics, in old and corrupted societies, are never established but from the prevalence of an extravagant and insatiable thirst for riches or distinction in the majority of the middle classes. Thence the easy and rapid transition from the excitement of democracy to the servility of adulation, equally conspicuous in France after the Revolutions of 1789, 1830, and 1848.

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1807.

¹ Montg. vi.
304, 306.

52.

Endowment
of the new
peers, with
revenues
from foreign
states.Address of
the senate
to the Em-
peror on the
subject.

imperial gift, which was thus the price of abandoning all their former principles, and put on with alacrity the state livery which was the badge of their servitude, but *unanimously* embodied their devotion in an address to the Emperor on the occasion, which must be given entire, as one of the most memorable monuments of political tergiversation and baseness that the history of the world has to exhibit.¹*

The institution of this new hereditary noblesse was attended with one peculiarity, which was at once indicative of the ephemeral basis on which it was founded, and the incapability of the infant order to answer any of those important purposes in the state which an ancient and independent aristocracy affords. Most of the new

* "Sire! the senate presents to your august Majesty the tribute of its gratitude for the goodness which has prompted you to communicate, by his most Serene Highness, the Chancellor of the Empire, the two statutes relative to the creation of imperial titles, of the 30th March 1806, and the 19th August in the same year. By that great institution, Sire, your Majesty has affixed the seal of durability to all the others which France owes to your wisdom. In proportion, Sire, as one observes the mutual links which connect together the different parts, so multiplied and yet so firmly united, of that great fabric; in proportion as time, which alone can develop the full extent of its benefits, shall have fully unfolded them, what effects may not be anticipated from your august wisdom! A new value given to the recompenses which your Majesty never fails to award to real merit, in what obscurity soever fortune may have placed it, and how varied soever may be the services which it has rendered to the state; new motives to imitate such great examples; fresh bonds of fidelity, devotion, and love towards our country, its sovereign and his dynasty; a closer bond of union between our institutions and those of confederate or friendly nations; fathers recompensed in what is most dear to them; the recollections of families rendered more touching; the memory of our ancestors enshrined; the spirit of order, of economy, and of conservatism strengthened by its most obvious interest, that of its descendants; the first bodies of the empire and the most noble of our institutions drawn closer together; all dread of the return of the *odious Feudal System* for ever abolished; every recollection foreign to what you have established extinguished; the splendour of the new families deriving fresh lustre from the rays of the crown; the origin of their illustration rendered contemporary with your glory; the past, the present, and the future attached to your power, as, in the sublime conceptions of the great poets of antiquity, the first link of the great chain of destiny was placed in the hands of the gods:—such, Sire, are the results of the institution to which your Majesty has given life. The combination of such important results, affording security to those to whom the present is as nothing when there is no guarantee for the future, consolidates in its foundations, fortifies in all its parts, brings to perfection in its proportions, and embellishes in its ornaments, the immense social edifice, at the summit of which is placed the resplendent throne of the greatest of monarchs."—See *Moniteur*, 11th March 1807; and MONTG. vi. 306, 308. The extraordinary nature of this address will not be duly appreciated unless it is

nobles were soldiers of fortune ; almost all of them were destitute of any property but such as their official emoluments, or the opportunities they had enjoyed of foreign plunder, had afforded. To obviate this inconvenience, and prevent the new nobility from degenerating into a mere set of titled menials or pensioned functionaries, Napoleon fell upon the expedient of attaching to these titles rich endowments, drawn from the revenues of foreign countries conquered by the French arms, or held by them in subjection.* All the French marshals and the chief dignitaries of the empire were in this manner quartered on the German or Italian states, and

recollected that a considerable portion of these obsequious senators, now so ready to wear the imperial livery, and form a part in the great pyramid which supported the throne, were once furious Jacobins, stained with the worst atrocities of the Reign of Terror, and almost all at one period ardent supporters of the principles of liberty and equality. It is sufficient to mention the names of Cambacérès, Fouché, Sièyes, Merlin de Douai, Beugnot, Cornudet, Fontanes, Fabre de l'Aude, &c., besides a host of others.

* As a specimen of the manner in which the imperial generals or dignitaries were endowed out of the revenues of the conquered or subject states, it may be sufficient to cite those who were allocated on the domains of the small Electorate of Haverov, with the total revenues assigned to each, as a first gift out of the spoils of the empire. Many were far more richly endowed afterwards—some three or four fold, as additional riches came to the disposal of the mighty conqueror.

	Bestowed from Hanover. Francs, or £ a-year.	Total revenue ultimately received. Francs.	Gift in money. Francs.
Berthier, Prince of Neufchâtel,	4100,000	5,600	405,000
Bernadotte, Prince of Pontecorvo,	100,000	4,000	291,000
Mortier, Duke of Treviso, . . .	100,000	4,000	198,000
Duroc, Duke of Friuli, . . .	85,000	3,400	200,000
Ney, Duke of Elchingen, . . .	83,000	3,820	229,000
Augereau, Duke of Castiglione,	80,000	3,200	172,000
Massena, Duke of Rivoli, . . .	80,000	3,200	183,000
Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza,	66,000	2,700	150,000
Davoust, Duke of Auerstadt, . .	60,000	2,400	410,000
Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, . . .	53,000	2,150	305,000
Lefebvre, Duke of Dantzic, . . .	50,000	2,000	200,000
Prince Lebrun,	50,000	2,000	200,000
Lannes, Duke of Montebello, . .	50,000	2,000	328,000
Marshal Bessières,	50,000	2,000	200,000
Gen. Sebastiani,	40,000	1,600	150,000
Junot, Duke of Abrantès, . . .	35,000	1,450	200,000
Gen. Friand,	30,000	1,200	100,000
Gen. Loison,	30,000	1,200	100,000

Carry forward, 1,182,000 or 47,920

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large sums, drawn from the industry and resources of their inhabitants, annually brought to the great central mart of Paris to be expended. The increase of opulence to the imperial capital was thus indeed most sensible; and in a similar proportion did the imperial government, the author of so many benefits to its citizens, become popular and respected; but the effects of this perpetual abstraction of wealth from other countries to the metropolis of the great nation, were to the last degree vexatious to their inhabitants, and proved one considerable cause of the deep-felt and far-spread hatred which ultimately occasioned its fall. In this respect Napoleon not only evinced none of his wonted sagacity,

	On Hanover. Francs, or £ a-year.		In all.
Brought forward, 1,182,000 or 47,920			
Generals Victor, Oudinot, St Hilaire, Gardeneu, Gazan, Caffarelli, Dupas, Lasalle, Klein, Songs, Dorsenne, Rapp, each 20,000. On Hanover, in all, 100,000 on an average, . . .	240,000	9,600	1,200,000
Generals Hullin, Drouet, Compans, Gudin, Verdier, Bonnies, Lacoste, Daru, and others, in all 13, 25,000 each. On Hanover, in all, 120,000 on an average, . . .	325,000	13,000	1,360,000
Marmont Duke of Ragusa, Maret, Fouché, Decrès, Regnier, Mollien, Gaudin, Champagny, Lemarrois, Clarke, Cretel, Bertrand, Moncey, Perignon, Servières, Marchand, Ségur, Dupont, 20,000 each, in all 19 individuals. On Hanover, in all, 100,000 on an average, . . .	380,000	15,200	1,900,000
Mouton, Belliard, Savary, Lauriston, each 15,000. On Hanover, in all, 80,000 on an average, . . .	60,000	2,400	240,000
General Becker, . . .	12,000	480	30,000
Regnaud St Jean d'Angely, Dufermier, Lacrier, Gen. Grouchy, Gen. Nansouty, Bigot, each 10,000, in all. On Hanover, in all, 50,000 on an average, . . .	60,000	2,400	300,000

Total, 2,259,000 £91,000 yearly.

—HARD. x. 488–500; *Pièces Just*; and THIERS, *Consulat et l'Empire*, viii. 139, 140.

but acted in direct opposition to what common sense dictated as the fitting course for a monarch of a great and varied empire. How different was the policy of the Romans, who not only left at the disposal of the municipalities in their extensive dominions the greater proportion of their local revenues, but annually remitted large sums from the imperial treasury for the construction of edifices of utility or embellishment in all their principal cities; so that the sway of the Emperors was felt chiefly in the increasing opulence and splendour of their provincial capitals!¹

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¹ Hard. x.
488, 490.

It was another part of Napoleon's system, which he laboured assiduously to promote, to effect an amalgamation, or *fusion* as he called it, of the ancient with the modern noblesse, with the design that, burying in oblivion former discord, they should cordially unite in resisting any further changes, and supporting the imperial throne. With this view he not only opened his antechambers to the old nobility, who rushed in crowds to occupy them; but promoted to the utmost of his power the distribution of the ancient families through the innumerable offices of his dominions, and did all that he could, by the offer of splendid establishments, to overcome the repugnance of the high noblesse to matrimonial alliances with the soldiers of fortune who had risen from the ranks to greatness under the banners of the empire. In one respect, this system succeeded even beyond his expectation. Fondly attached, notwithstanding all their reverses, to feudal ideas, clinging still, notwithstanding a total change of manners, to antiquated customs, the old nobility found themselves suddenly elevated to an extraordinary and un hoped-for degree of importance in the court of the new Emperor; and, by the grace of their manners, the brilliancy of their conversation, and their perfect familiarity with the formalities and etiquette of the ancient régime,² soon acquired a marked superiority in that field over the soldiers or civilians of humble birth

53.
System of
fusion of
the ancient
and modern
noblesse,
which Na-
poleon pur-
sued.

² Pelet, 107,
Las Cas. ii.
288, 289.
De Stael,
Rév. Franc.
ii. 333.

CHAP. whom the changes of the Revolution had elevated to
L. greatness.

1807.

54.

Readiness
with which
the old no-
bles entered
into these
views.

By a singular, but not unnatural feeling also, they were destitute of the scruples at accepting offices in the household which persons of less illustrious descent might have felt. A Montmorency would willingly become maid of honour to the Empress, or even descend to lace her shoe, which a lady of plebeian birth might have deemed a degradation. It is for the same reasons, that persons of good family are in general so much more courteous in their manners to their inferiors than *parvenus*. The distinction of their birth supersedes the necessity of its perpetual and vexatious assertion. Thus the court was soon filled with the descendants of the old noblesse; and, widely as the Emperor opened his doors for their reception, amply as he multiplied the chamberlains, equerries, lords in waiting, ladies of the bedchamber, squires, pages of the antechambers, and other functionaries of the palace, he found it impossible to keep pace with the crowds of titled applicants who incessantly besieged its gates for admission. The new nobility soon conceived a violent jealousy at these intruders who had supplanted them in the court circles, and openly testified their animosity even in presence of the Emperor himself. The system of fusion met with very little success with the ladies of the rival classes of nobility; but the substantial advantages of great fortune and dignified station reconciled the plebeian duchesses to the superior favour shown to their patrician rivals; while the brilliant uniforms, high stations, and military lustre of the young generals, induced not a few of the daughters of the oldest families in France to ally their fortunes to the sons of those upon whom their parents would have deemed it a degradation to have bestowed a look.¹*

¹ Pelet, 107,
108. Las
Cas. ii. 288,
289. De
Stael, Rév.
Franc. ii.
333, 335.
D'Abr. ix.
287; ii. 324.

* The reasons assigned by Napoleon in the council of state for the employment of the ancient in preference to the modern noblesse, were as follows:—
"It is among the old families that you can alone find still some remains of great fortune; by that means they exercise a great influence on government.

Notwithstanding all his efforts, however, it was impossible for Napoleon to conceal from the clear-sighted republicans of France, that the restoration of hereditary titles of honour was an entire departure, in the most vital point, from all the principles of the Revolution. In fact, the only surprising thing is, that he himself did not perceive how completely its ultimate effect was subversive of all the passions which had agitated France in 1789, and during the whole fervour of its subsequent changes. It was in vain to say that titles of honour were now restored as a personal, not a hereditary distinction; that the career of merit, both in the civil and military department, was open to all; and that every peasant's son might indulge the hope, by bravery in the field, of fighting his way from the humble rank of a grenadier to a marshal's baton and dukedom; or, by skill and address in diplomacy, of advancing from the counter of a tradesman to the dignity of ambassador and prince of the empire. During the reign of Napoleon, indeed, and under the pressure of those national difficulties which rendered it indispensable to look for talent in every grade, even the lowest in the state, there might be some foundation for this observation; and doubtless the aspiring temper of the *tiers-état* could not but feel gratified at beholding the number of their own, or an inferior rank, who now as warriors or statesmen occupied the highest stations in the empire. So powerful was this feeling, and so strong the jealousy still felt of the old noblesse, that the *tiers-état* and peasants in France generally and cordially sup-

CHAP.
L.

1807.

55.

Great discontent of the French republicans at the institution of titles of honour.

How could you compose a court with the men of the Revolution? You find in their ranks only honourable functionaries without fortune, or opulent contractors without character—a court of salaried officials would be at once onerous to the state, and without dignity in the eyes of the people. If the old fortunes are divided by distributions on death, they are restored by successions: the new fortunes have nothing to look to in that way; on the contrary, they are surrounded by needy relatives. Government can now no longer enrich as formerly its servants by the domains of the crown or confiscations: it ought, therefore, as much as possible, to take advantage of fortunes already made, and employ them in its service.”—PELET, *Conseil d'Etat de Napoléon*, 107, 108.

CHAP.
L.

1807.

¹ Bign. vii.
114.

ported the institution of the new noblesse, from the hope that they themselves or their sons might obtain a place in it, and thus be placed on a level with the haughty noblesse, whose family lustre they admired, while they hated themselves.¹

56.
Objections
felt against
it by the
republican
party.

But, to those who carried their views beyond the reign of the Emperor or the existing generation, and looked to the present institutions as a guarantee for republican equality in future times, these considerations afforded little matter for consolation. They could not disguise from themselves that the new imperial dignities, though the reward of merit to the present holders, would become the birthright of descent to the next generation; they could not hope that the same stirring and anxious events would always continue, which at present rendered it necessary for government to throw themselves for support on the middle classes of the people; and they anticipated with dismay the time when, during the pacific periods of subsequent reigns, the imperial nobility would come to monopolise the influence, offices, and power of the state, as completely as ever had been the case by their feudal predecessors in the days of Francis I. or Louis XIV. What was the origin of all nobility but personal merit? Every family, how great soever in its subsequent stages, had some obscure citizen for its original founder; the first king had been a fortunate soldier. If an aristocracy existed at all obstructing the rise of inferior citizens, and monopolising for a privileged class the influence and riches of the state, it would be no consolation to the friends of equality to assert that it took its origin from the revolutionary, not the feudal wars, and that its paladins were to be found, not in the Round Table of Charlemagne, but among the marshals of Napoleon.

In truth, the Emperor was too far-sighted not to feel the justice of these observations; and although in his addresses to the people he was cautious to hold out the new nobility as the reward of merit only, yet he secretly

felt that it was in fact the revival of a family distinction. But he was also aware that the favour of the populace is not to be relied on for the durable support of government; that a hereditary monarchy cannot exist without a hereditary aristocracy, whose interests are entwined with its fate; and that without such lasting support, founded on the permanent interest of a privileged class, his throne would probably be lost by his descendants as speedily as it had been won by himself. All history, and especially that of the Asiatic empires, proved that no family, how great soever in its general founder, could long keep possession of the throne, unless it had cast its anchor either in the interests of a hereditary nobility, or the force of religious attachment centred in the descendants of a single family. And the friends of freedom, had they possessed more penetration than at that time, or even now, prevails on this subject in France, might have been consoled by the reflection, that, however hostile to that passion for equality which formed the leading principle of the Revolution, such an aristocracy formed an essential element toward the establishment of lasting freedom; and that, although there were many instances in which its exclusive spirit had proved an insurmountable bar to the elevation of the middle classes of society, there was not one example of liberty not having entirely perished under the debasing influence of a centralised despotism, when such a barrier was not left to resist its encroachments.

The rapidity with which court etiquette, and all the minutiae of regal manners, now spread, exceeds belief, and, notwithstanding the abundance of contemporary proof, appears almost incredible in a country so recently convulsed by revolutionary passions. The old archives of the monarchy were ransacked to discover the whole details of the ancient ceremonials; whoever could point out an additional bow to be made, a more respectful mode of presenting an address to be adopted, a more

CHAP.
L.

1807.

57.

Napoleon's
reasons for
disregarding
these com-
plaints.

58.

Rapid pro-
gress of
court eti-
quette at
Paris.

CHAP.
L.

1807.

gorgeous display of pomp or splendour to be introduced, was regarded as a benefactor of the human race. The ancient ceremonies at the rising and retiring to rest of the kings were re-established, though abridged in some of their details; the antiquated forms of presentation were revived; and it was seriously debated at court whether the fatiguing form of dining in public once a-week should not be restored. In magnificence and splendour the imperial court far exceeded not only anything in Europe, but all that the pride of Louis XIV. had conceived. The whole royal palaces, with the exception of Versailles, were refurnished in the most sumptuous style; the value of the plate and furniture which they contained was estimated at fifty millions of francs, or two millions sterling. At the marriage of the Empress Maria-Louisa, four queens held her train. In the antechambers of the Emperor, seven kings were sometimes to be seen. And when this occurred, it was just seventeen years after it had been written, with general consent, over the principal archway of the Tuileries—"Monarchy is abolished in France, and *will never be restored.*"¹

¹ Las Cas.
ii. 290, 291.
De Stael,
Rév. Franc.
ii. 334, 335.

59.

Advantages
of the Im-
perial gov-
ernment.

While not merely the forms of monarchical, but the essence of despotic power, were in this manner re-established in France, amidst the general concurrence of the nation, the Emperor was careful to accompany the change with such substantial benefits and real ameliorations, as amply reconciled the great mass of the citizens to the loss of the once-prized democratic powers, which had brought such unheard-of disasters on their possessors and the whole community. Though completely despotic, the imperial government had one incalculable advantage; it was regular, conservative, and systematic. The taxes were heavy, but the public expenditure was immense, and enabled the people to pay them with facility; no forced loans or arbitrary confiscations swept off, as in the time of the Republic, the accumulations of years by one fell exaction; no uncertainty as to enjoying the

fruits of industry paralysed in any branch of employment the hand of the labourer. Everything was orderly and tranquil under the imperial sway ; the Emperor demanded, indeed, more than half their sons from his subjects of every degree, but a boundless career was opened to the conscripts ; and visions of a marshal's baton or a general's staff floated before the eyes of many a youthful aspirant, who was destined to an early and unheeded grave on the field of battle, or amidst the horrors of the hospital.

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The stoppage of all external commerce, combined with the vast and constantly increasing expenditure of government, produced an extraordinary degree of vigour in domestic industry and internal communication. The roads, the canals which connected the provinces with each other, were covered with waggons and boats laden with the richest merchandise. The cultivators everywhere found an ample market for their produce in the vast consumption of the armies ; the manufacturing cities vied with each other in activity and enterprise ; and even commercial wealth, reviving from its ashes under the firm rule of the Emperor, exerted its energies on internal traffic, and, turning inwards, promoted home circulation through the great arteries of the empire. Beet-root was largely cultivated as a substitute for the sugar-cane ; and though the saccharine matter obtained from that useful vegetable was inferior in sweetness and richness to that which the West India islands yielded, yet it was superior in clearness and delicacy, and, as a native production, was justly admired. Lyons, Rouen, and the Flemish cities again resounded with the activity of the artisan ; their ruined fabrics were restored, the empty warehouses replenished ; and the vast internal consumption of the empire, secured from all foreign competition, rapidly raised from the dust the prosperous manufactures of the monarchy, which the confiscations of the Revolution had to all appearance destroyed. The Emperor set an example at once of

60.
Great internal prosperity of France under the empire.

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¹ Bign. vi.
403, 407.
Jom. ii. 442,
444. Bign.
vii. 101,
102.

prudent economy and noble magnificence, in the management of his personal expenses and the embellishment of his palaces. He annually saved twelve or fifteen millions of francs, (£480,000 or £600,000,) out of his civil list; and it was from this source that he provided the funds which adorned and embellished the royal palaces of France, and enriched them with furniture which cost above three millions sterling.¹

61.
Great effect
of the foreign
plunder and
contribu-
tions on the
industry of
France.
Great canals
set on foot.

Much as this extraordinary flood of internal prosperity was owing to the rapid circulation of wealth, occasioned by the great expenditure, exceeding thirty millions sterling, which was drawn from the ordinary revenue of the Empire,* more still was to be ascribed to the enormous sums, amounting to half as much more, which were extracted from the richest states of continental Europe in the shape of subsidies, contributions, or the maintenance of the imperial armies, which was all expended, directly or indirectly, for the benefit of the French people. The immense sums, amounting to above twenty-four millions sterling, have been already mentioned² which were extracted from Prussia and the countries between the Elbe and the Vistula, in two years subsequent to the irruption of the French armies into their territories in October 1806. But exorbitant as this was, it constituted but a part of the great scheme of foreign plunder which formed so important an element in, or rather the entire basis of, the general system of the imperial government. We have the authority of the able and impartial French biographer of Napoleon for the assertion, "that since their departure from the heights of Boulogne, two hundred thousand

² *Ante*, ch.
xli. § 77.

* Revenue of the empire, exclusive of contributions from foreign states and all extraordinary supplies:—

Its revenues
from 1808 to
1813.

In 1808,	664,879,901 francs, or £26,600,000	
1809,	723,513,020	... 29,000,000
1810,	744,392,027	... 29,700,000
1811, including Roman states,	907,295,657	... 36,300,000
1812,	876,266,180	... 35,300,000
1813,	824,273,749	... 33,000,000

—DUC DE GAETA, i. 307, 308.

It is not going too far to say, that the sums drawn during these years,

French soldiers had been constantly fed, clothed, paid, and lodged, at the expense of foreign states; above four hundred million francs of contributions (£16,000,000) had, in addition, been levied in money or goods, from the countries occupied by the imperial troops; the treasury had received part of this sum, and the remainder, expended on the services of the army, had reduced by one-half the amount required from the French exchequer for its support. A few years before, Louisiana had been sold by the First Consul to America, to obtain a supply for the pressing wants of the treasury; on his return from the campaign of Austerlitz, the Emperor found the treasury exhausted, and the bank on the eve of insolvency; but the campaign of the two next years gave him a year's revenue in advance in the coffers of the state, besides a large reserved treasure in the vaults of the Tuileries."¹ When such extraordinary supplies were obtained by foreign plunder for the French treasury, it is not surprising that a very great degree of prosperity should have pervaded all its departments, and in an especial manner made itself felt at the metropolis. In truth, all the great and splendid works thenceforward undertaken by the Emperor, and which have shed such an imperishable lustre round his name, were carried on by funds wrung, directly or indirectly, from the suffering inhabitants of his subject territories.² But these public works were really so splendid, and founded on such noble designs, that the expenditure on them, from whatever source derived, could scarcely be a subject of regret. Canals, the only internal mode of communication then known, in an especial manner attracted the atten-

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¹ *Jom. ii.*
437, 438.² *De Stael,*
Rév. Franc,
ii. 266.

directly or indirectly, by plunder, contributions, tribute in subsidies from foreign states, amounted to at least half as much more; and the sums, from the difference in the value of money, were equal to almost double their nominal amount in the currency of Great Britain. Thus during the last six years of Napoleon, an annual expenditure equal to nearly a hundred millions sterling in England took place in the French empire; of which more than a third was drawn from foreign countries. It is not surprising that such a government for the time should be popular, notwithstanding its despotic character and the conscription.

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tion of the Emperor. Ten great canals, destined to unite the principal rivers of France to each other, were set on foot. They joined the Scheldt and the Meuse; the Meuse and the Rhine; the Rhine, the Saone, and the Rhone; the Scheldt and the Somme; the Somme, the Oise, and the Seine; the Seine, the Saone, and the Rhone; the Seine and the Loire; the Loire and the Cher; the north sea and the Mediterranean. By this means a vast internal net-work of canals was spread over France, uniting its most distant provinces, and affording an outlet in every direction for its produce. Extensive chains of locks were constructed, under the special directions of the Emperor, to surmount the summit levels in the interior of the country, which were soon executed with that skill which has deservedly made the French engineers the admiration of the world. Indescribable was his anxiety to hasten these great works. "If we do not use diligence," said he, "not three of these canals will be finished before we are in our grave. Wars and the reign of fools will succeed, and these noble undertakings will remain unfinished. I wish to make the glory of my reign consist in changing the face of the empire. The execution of great improvements is as indispensable to the interest of my people as to my own satisfaction."¹

¹ Thiers,
viii. 126.

62.

Striking account of the public works of France by the minister of the interior.
Aug. 16.

And these works undertaken and executed under the imperial government, were really such as to justify the enthusiastic admiration of a people even less passionately devoted than the French to public splendour. They were thus noticed in the report of the minister of the interior in August 1807, when Napoleon met the Chambers after his return from Tilsit; and after making every allowance for the exaggerated style of such state papers, much remains to attract the admiration of succeeding ages, and demonstrate the great objects to which, in domestic administration, the ambition of the Emperor was directed. "Thirteen thousand leagues of public roads have been kept in order or repaired; the two greatest works under-

taken for centuries, the roads of Mont Cenis and of the Simplon, have, after six years of labour, been completed. The road from Spain to Italy is in progress: the Apennines are the theatre of a series of works which will unite Piedmont to the shores of the Mediterranean, and complete the union of Liguria to France: eighteen rivers have seen their navigation improved or prolonged beyond hitherto impassable barriers, by means of locks, dykes, or towing-paths: four bridges have been erected during the last campaign: ten others are in full progress: ten canals, almost all commenced during the present reign, are in full activity. Nor do the maritime harbours offer fewer prodigies. Antwerp, so recently insignificant, has become the centre of our great maritime preparations; for the first time that part of the Scheldt sees vessels of seventy-four and eighty guns floating on its bosom: fourteen ships of the line are on the stocks within its walls; many are finished, and have descended to Flushing: that harbour has seen its docks deepened, its entrance improved, and it is already capable of containing a squadron: at Dunkirk and Calais, piers have been constructed; at Cherbourg two vast breakwaters erected; at Rochefort and Marseilles equally important maritime improvements are in progress.

“The existence of our cotton manufactures being secured, investigations are in progress for the discovery of places suited to the culture of that important article: the improvement of the linen fabrics has been the object of constant solicitude. Veterinary schools have been established, and already fill the army and the fields with skilled practitioners: a code is preparing for the regulation of commerce: the School of Arts and Mechanics at Compiègne flourishes, and has been transferred to Chalons: others on a similar plan are in the course of formation: Italy opens an extensive mart for our industry: the war, changed into a contest for commercial independence, has become the greatest stimulant to French industry: every

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63.

Manufacturing and industrial works, &c.

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one of our conquests, while it is a market closed to England, is a new encouragement afforded to French enterprise. Nor has the capital of this great empire been neglected; it is the Emperor's wish that that illustrious city, become the first in the universe, should befit by its splendour so glorious a destiny.

64.
Great works
in Paris
and else-
where.

"At one extremity of Paris a bridge has been completed, to which victory has given the name of Austerlitz; at another, a second is commencing, to which Jena will afford a still more glorious appellation; the Louvre advances to its completion, marking, in its matured progress, through centuries, the successive ages of Francis I., of Henry IV., of Louis XIV., restored to life by the voice of Napoleon. Fountains without number flow night and day in all parts of the city, testifying even to the humblest classes, the care which the Emperor bestows on their most trifling accommodation. Two triumphal arches are already erected, or founded, one in the centre of the palace inhabited by the Genius of Victory; the other at the extremity of the most beautiful avenue of the finest city in the world. The Tomb of Desaix has been erected on the summit of the Alps, whose rugged precipices are not less startled at the monument of our perfection in the arts, than they were at the passage of the artillery drawn by the arms of valour. The fine arts in France are occupied almost entirely in tracing on marble or canvass the glorious exploits of our armies: while the mind of the Emperor, ever meditating fresh triumphs, has selected for his antagonist the Demon of Ignorance; and, by the establishment of twelve colleges for the study of law, and gratuitous schools for the teaching of medicine in all the principal cities of the empire, has laid the foundation of the extension of general knowledge in the most essential subjects of public instruction." Magnificent as these undertakings were, they formed but a part of what was contemplated by Napoleon. "We must never forget," said he, "the cry of the peasants when vexed by subaltern

agents,—‘Ah ! if the King but knew it !’ Believe me, I have good reasons for not slumbering on my seat. I know the French people : they will fully appreciate my long anxieties : I owe such to the efforts which I demand of them. Nothing but my vigilant superintendence can retain so many subalterns in their duty. That surveillance must be incessant ; it must extend to the minutest details. I fear neither fatigue nor long journeys ; they always give me things to see.”¹

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1807.

¹ Bign. vi.
402, 407 ;
vii. 105.
Moniteur,
Aug. 16,
1807.

When the French people saw this magnificent announcement of internal improvement, contemporaneous with the official promulgation of the treaty of Tilsit, the conquest of Prussia, the restoration of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, and the erection of the kingdom of Westphalia, it is not surprising that they were dazzled by the brilliancy of the spectacle, and yielded to the pleasing illusion that the Revolution, nursed in violence and baptised in blood, was to sink to rest amidst a blaze of unprecedented glory. But the querulous discontent and substantial oppression of other nations might even then have taught them that this splendid fabric rested on a dangerous foundation, and that the system was not likely to be durable which impoverished all others to enrich one favoured state. And a sagacious observer of this long and glowing enumeration of the internal projects of the Emperor, could hardly have avoided the inference, that the government had now drawn to itself the patronage and direction of domestic improvement of every description ; that the very magnitude and universality of public undertakings proved that private enterprise had sunk into the dust ; and that, reversing the whole principles of the Revolution, the welfare of society had come to depend on the point of the pyramid.

65.
General delirium which
it produced.

The finances of France, in an especial manner, occupied the attention of the Emperor ; and the talent of his subjects, adapted beyond any other people in Europe to organisation and accuracy in matters of detail, brought that important branch of administration to an extraordi-

66.
Finances
of France
under the
empire.

rienced at the imperial headquarters, and that the sums extracted from them during its continuance amounted to at least a half of those derived from the legitimate taxation of his own subjects. But in addition to this, the internal taxation of France was established on the best principles, by that salutary intermixture of indirect with direct taxation, which can alone diffuse the public burdens, in a just and equal manner, over the whole community. The longer his experience extended, the more was he attached to the admirable system of indirect taxation, the only secure basis for the permanent income of a great nation. "The principle I should wish to see established," said he, on 20th February 1806, "is to introduce a great number of moderate indirect taxes, susceptible of augmentation when the public necessities call for their increase." Nor was Napoleon less alive to the necessity, amidst such immense industrial undertakings, of providing a currency adequate to their execution. He had not embraced the doctrine of the political economists, that the best way to make a nation prosperous is to engage it in vast undertakings, and after rendering its issue of paper dependent on the specie in the hands of the bankers, send its metallic circulation headlong out of the country. He increased the capital and shares of the bank of France from 45,000,000 francs to 90,000,000, (£3,600,000.) "The bank," said he, "should be to France what the Thames is to London." At the same time he lowered the rate of interest, where it was six per cent, to five; where it was five, to four. "I am going," said he, "to introduce a law which is not according to the ideas of your *idealogue*s: it is to lower the rate of interest to five per cent." Nor did

100,000,000 francs, or £4,000,000, and for this we have the authority of his own words; but no mention of this contribution, any more than of the £3,400,000 paid annually by Spain and Portugal, or the £24,000,000 levied on the north of Germany, appears in these annual budgets.—See *Séance*, 7th April 1806; PELET.

What a picture of the result of the Revolution which had confiscated the whole property of the church! Army and ordnance, 336,000,000 francs yearly, or £13,500,000. Religion for 42,000,000 of people, 14,000,000 francs, or £556,000 annually!

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the important subject of the management of the poor escape his attention; on the contrary, it awakened it in the highest degree. "The principle should be," said he, "that every mendicant should be arrested: but to arrest him to put him in prison would be barbarous and absurd. You must make his arrest the means of converting the idle mendicant into an industrious citizen. I attach the greatest importance, and as great idea of glory, to the destruction of mendicity. Funds are not wanting; but everything appears to me to advance slowly. We must not pass over the earth without leaving some traces which may commend our memory to posterity. Use the utmost diligence; make everywhere the necessary inquiries: you have to aid you intelligent prefects, young auditors, zealous engineers. The winter evenings are long; get ready portfolios which may give us something to occupy them, and enable us to bring that great undertaking, the '*extirpation of mendicity*,' to maturity."¹*

¹ Pelet, 236.
Bign. vii.
102, 103.
Thiers, viii.
119, 120,
124.

67.
Despotic
character of
the new law
of high trea-
son.

But the march of despotism is not for ever on flowers; nor is it blessings and splendid improvements only which it confers upon its subjects. It soon appeared that the brilliant public works and bewildering enumerations of great undertakings with which the minister of the interior dazzled the eyes of the people, were but the splendid covering with which Napoleon was gilding over the old and well-known chains of Roman servitude. On the 1st February 1810, the penal code made its appearance; and the few real patriots who had survived the storms of the Revolution perceived, with grief, that out of four hundred and eighty crimes which it enumerated, no less than two hundred and twenty were state offences.² In this long and portentous enumeration were included almost all the offences embraced under the denomination of lese-majesty in the jurisprudence of the lower empire; among others, the non-revelation of crimes affecting the security of the

² Code Penal, § 75 to 131; and § 132 to 294.

* Napoleon to the Minister of the Interior, November 2, 1807, and September 17, 1807.—BIGNON, vii. 93-108; THIERS, *Consulat et l'Empire*, viii. 126, 180.

state which have come to any one's knowledge; illegal societies or assemblies of any kind; and seditious offences, committed either by writings published or unpublished, images or engravings. The punishment of such non-revelation was declared to be the galleys, if the crime not disclosed was lese-majesty; imprisonment from two to five years, if seditious. So special and minute were the crimes against the security of the state, and so slender the evidence required to establish them, that in troubled times, and in the hands of a despotic monarch, they furnished the most ample means of totally extinguishing the liberties of the people, and rendering every person amenable to punishment who in the slightest degree obstructed the measures of government.¹

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L.
1807.

¹ Code Penal, Arts. 132-294.

Imprisonment has ever been the great instrument of despotic power; it is not by heart-rending punishments inflicted on its victims in presence of the people, but by the silent, unseen operation of confinement and seclusion, that the spirit of freedom has in general been most effectually broken. Founded as the empire of Napoleon was on the suppression, or rather turning into another channel, of all the passions of the Revolution, and succeeding, as it did, to a period when great political parties had been interested in their preservation, it was not to be expected that this formidable engine was to remain powerless in his hands. It is a remarkable fact, highly characteristic of the ambitious spirit which inspired, and the absence of all regard for real freedom which distinguished, the whole changes of the Revolution, that not one of the successive parties which were elevated to power during its progress ever thought of the obvious expedient, essential to anything like freedom, of limiting by law the period to which imprisonment, at the instance of government, without bringing the accused to trial, could extend. Each was perfectly willing that arbitrary imprisonment should continue, provided only that they enjoyed the power of inflicting it. During the Reign of Terror, this

68.
History of
the French
prisons since
the Revolution.

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1807.

iniquitous system was carried to a height unparalleled in any former age; and above two hundred thousand state captives at one time groaned in the prisons of France. Even under the comparatively regular and constitutional sway of the Directory, it was still largely acted upon. The first use of their power made by each faction, as they got possession of the executive, was to consign all the dangerous persons of the opposite parties to prison; and we have the authority of Napoleon for the assertion, that at one time the state prisoners under their rule amounted to sixty thousand, and when he took possession of power, they were still nine thousand.¹

¹ Napoleon
in Month. i.
178.

69.
State pri-
sons under
Napoleon.

March 3.

Under his own vigorous but humane administration, the amount was much lessened, but still it was considerable; and great numbers of persons constantly remained in jail, without any means either of procuring their liberation or forcing on their trial. Their number and unhappy condition had long attracted the attention of the Emperor; and at length a decree was passed regulating their treatment and places of confinement, and defining the authorities by whom their detention was to be authorised. By this decree eight state prisons were established in France, viz.—Samur, Ham, If, Landskrown, Pierre-Chatel, Fenestrelles, Campiano, and Vincennes. The detention of prisoners in them required to be on a warrant of the private council of the Emperor, on a report of the minister of police, or of public justice. The former was invested with the power of putting any person he thought proper under the surveillance of the police. The captives in the state prisons retained the power of disposing of their effects, unless it was otherwise ordered; but they could not receive any money or movables except in the presence of the governor of the prison, and by his authority.² All correspondence or intercourse with the rest of the world was rigorously forbidden; and any jailer who should permit or connive at the correspondence of any prisoner with any person whatever, was to be

² Decree,
March 3,
1810. Moni-
teur, March
3, 1810, and
Montg. vii.
11, 12.

dismissed from office, and punished with six months' confinement.

Under this rigorous system, great numbers of persons of the most elevated station and noblest character were confined in these state prisons during the whole remainder of the reign of Napoleon, not only from France itself, but from Piedmont, Lombardy, the Roman States, Germany, and Switzerland. An order, signed by Napoleon, the minister of police, or the privy council, was a sufficient warrant in all those countries, to occasion not only the arrest of any suspected person, but his detention in one of these gloomy fortresses, to all appearance for the whole remainder of his life. Nobles of the highest rank, priests of the most exalted station, citizens of the most irreproachable lives, were seized in every part of Europe subject to the French influence, paraded through the towns of the country to which they belonged, with shackles on their hands or chains round their necks, and then consigned to the gloomy oblivion of the state prisons, there to languish in captivity for the remainder of their lives. The offences for which this terrible penalty, worse than death itself, was inflicted, were of the most trivial kind; their being regarded as punishable at all savoured rather of the dark policy of Tiberius than the more lenient administration even of despotic countries in modern times. An unhappy *bon-mot*, a cutting jest at the expense of any of the imperial authorities, a few sarcastic lines, were sufficient to consign their unfortunate authors to close confinement for the rest of their days.¹

Cardinal Pacca, long a victim of the tyrannical government of Napoleon, on account of the courageous stand which he made against his spoliation of the Holy See, and who for six years was confined in the state prison of Fenestrelles among the solitude of the Alps, has given the following account of some of his fellow-captives:—
“ On my arrival in the prison, one of the first persons I met was the arch-priest of Fontainelle, in the duchy of

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L.

1807.

70.
Trivial offences for which persons were confined in these state prisons.

¹ Pacca's Mem. i. 237, 239.

71.
Cardinal Pacca's account of them.

CHAP.
L.

1807.

Parma, *vir simplex et timens Deum*, who had been sentenced to three years' confinement for having written, in 1809, to a neighbouring curate, that the Archduke John was advancing with his army; the next was Tognetti de Pisa, condemned to six months' imprisonment for having imprudently repeated a satire he had heard against the Emperor. Girolamo de Forte, also, for having composed some poems in favour of the Austrians, when, in 1800, they chased the French from Italy, and Leonard de Modigliano, Dean of Forli, for having been imprudent in his language against the French Emperor, were sentenced to an unlimited period of captivity, and only received their liberation on the downfall of Napoleon. They traversed the most populous cities of Lombardy in the course of their transmission to prison, the former with handcuffs, the latter with a chain about his neck, of which he still bore the marks when I saw him in the prison of Fenes-trelles."¹

¹ Pacca, i.
237, 239.

72.
Extraordi-
nary assem-
blage of per-
sons in these
state pri-
sons.

The state prisons exhibited the most extraordinary assemblage of persons. Those in the north of the empire were chiefly filled with ardent democrats, or devoted partisans of the house of Bourbon; those in the southern provinces with ecclesiastics or priests, who had expressed themselves incautiously regarding the captivity and dethronement of their spiritual sovereign. But numbers were there immured against whom no definite charge or overt act could be alleged, although, from some unknown cause, they had excited the jealousy of the Emperor or some of the imperial authorities. One day there arrived at the doors of these gloomy abodes a young nobleman of elegant figure, gay manners, and dissipated habits; the next an aged priest, in the decline of life, whose gray hairs were sent to bleach amidst the snows of the Alps; next came a violent democrat, who, untaught by the disasters of twenty years, was still raving about the Rights of Man; then a faithful adherent of the fallen dynasty, or an uncompromising asserter of the wrongs of the con-

quered provinces. All who in any way, or from any motive, had excited either the displeasure or the fears of the Emperor, were sent into captivity; but the greater proportion were ecclesiastics, among whom was the intrepid and able Cardinal Pacca, to whose able work we are indebted for the greater part of these valuable facts.^{1*}

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L.
1807.

¹ Pacca's
Mem. i. 237,
270, 271,
274.

One circumstance of peculiar and unprecedented severity attended the state victims of Napoleon, which had been unknown in Europe since the fall of the Roman empire. The extent of his dominions, the wide sway of his influence, rendered it almost impossible to fly from his persecution. By passing the frontier, and escaping into other states, no asylum, as in former times, was obtained; the influence of the imperial authorities, the terrors of the imperial sway, pursued the fugitive through the whole of Europe; and, as in the days of Caligula or Nero, the victim of imperial jealousy could find no resting-place on the Continent till he had passed the utmost limits of civilisation, and amidst the nomade or semi-barbarous tribes on the frontiers of Europe, found that security which the boasted institutions of its ancient states could no longer afford. The mandates of the Emperor, the inquisition of his police, reached the trembling fugitive as effectually on the utmost verge of the Austrian or Spanish dominions, in the extremity of Calabria, or in the marshes of Poland, as in the centre of Paris; and it was not till he had escaped into the

73.
Universal
extent of
Napoleon's
power, and
great aggra-
vation this
was of his
persecu-
tions.

* These ecclesiastics were sentenced to unlimited imprisonment for the most trifling causes. Out of nineteen who were imprisoned along with Cardinal Pacca in the fortress of Fenestrelles, amidst the Savoy Alps, three Spaniards by birth were there for having declared, at Parma, against the iniquitous war which the Emperor was waging against their nation; another for being suspected of having carried on a secret correspondence with the Pope when in confinement in France; others for having refused to take the oath of fidelity to the French Emperor in the Roman States; one from Bastia in Corsica for having preached a sermon containing some passages which were thought to be a satire on the Emperor, in regard to the affairs of the church. He was seized before he had concluded his discourse, and instantly conducted to prison.—PACCA, i. 271, 272.

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L.

1807.

Ukraine, or the Turkish provinces, or had found an asylum in the yet unsubdued realm of Britain, that the victim of imperial persecution could be secure of a resting-place. The knowledge of this, which universally prevailed, added fearfully to the terrors of the imperial government. The firmest mind, the most undaunted resolution, despaired of entering the lists with an authority which the whole civilised world seemed constrained to obey; and the immense majority of the prudent and the selfish quailed under the prospect of incurring the displeasure of a power whose lightest measure of animadversion would be banishment into the savage or uncivilised parts of the earth.* Such was the weight of this despotism that even the brothers of Napoleon could not endure it. Louis resigned the throne of Holland, and Lucien sought in England that freedom, for the loss of which all the grandeur and power of the brother whom his presence of mind had seated on the consular throne, could afford no compensation.¹

¹ De Stael, *Dix Ann. d'Exil*, 229, 319; and *Rév. Franc.* ii. 400.

With such powers to support his authority, and such terrors to overawe discontent or stifle resistance, Napoleon succeeded, without the least difficulty, in maintain-

* Madame de Stael has left a graphic picture of the terrors with which the jealousy of Napoleon was attended even to the softer sex; and which prompted her to undertake a perilous journey from Geneva by the Tyrol, Vienna, and Galicia, into Russia, in the depth of winter, in order to fly the intolerable anxiety of her situation. The Austrian police, acting under his orders, continued the same odious system; and it was not till she reached the frontiers of Old Russia, and war was declared between that power and Napoleon in 1812, that she was able to draw breath. The Duchess of Abrantès has given a still more romantic and interesting account of the extraordinary adventures of Mrs Spencer Smith, wife of the British resident at Stuttgard, who incurred the real or feigned displeasure of Napoleon in 1804, at the time of the Duc d'Enghien's murder, and the alleged counterplot in which he was participant to dethrone the Emperor.² She was actively pursued by the bloodhounds of the French police, solely on account of her husband's acts, from the neighbourhood of Vicenza, across the Julian and Tyrol Alps to the romantic shores of the Königs See, near Salzbouurg, where she for the first time got beyond their reach, by escaping into the Austrian territories, which were not at that period (1804) subjected to the disgrace of being forced to yield obedience to the mandates of the French police.—See D'ABR. xiii. 124. A few years later she could have found no security till she had traversed the whole imperial territories, and reached the Ottoman dominions.—*Dix Années d'Exil*, 239, 250.

² Ante, chap. xxxvii. § 39.

ing a despotism in France, during the whole remainder of the empire, unparalleled for rigour and severity in modern times. Not a whisper of resistance to his orders was anywhere heard throughout all his vast dominions. The senate joyfully and servilely registered his decrees, voted his taxes, and authorised his conscriptions; the press was occupied only with narrating his journeys, transcribing his eulogies, or enforcing his orders; the chamber of deputies vied with their dignified brethren in the upper chamber in addressing the Emperor only with the incense of Eastern adulation. The legislature voted, and the nation furnished to their ruler, during the ten years which elapsed from his assuming the imperial throne to his abdication, the stupendous number of TWO MILLIONS ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND CONSCRIPTS, and from among these, or the army existing in 1804, above *two millions two hundred thousand* perished in his service.* The taxes, enormously heavy, were only prevented from being raised to the highest possible amount by the systematic plunder of all the tributary countries of Europe. Yet his government was not only obeyed without a murmur during all that time, but these terrible sacrifices, draining as they did its heart's blood from the nation, were passively yielded by all classes :¹

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L.

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74.

Universal
and slavish
obedience to
his autho-
rity.¹ Montg. vi.
276, 277.

* The following is a summary of the men levied and destroyed in France during the ten years of the Emperor's reign—the most extraordinary instance of the destruction of the human species by the operation of regular government that exists in the annals of the world :—

Dates of the decrees of the Senate.	Men.
24th Sept. 1805,	80,000
Nov. 1806,	80,000
7th April 1807,	80,000
21st Jan. and 10th Sept. 1808,	240,000
18th April and 5th Oct. 1809,	76,000
13th Dec. 1810,	160,000
20th Dec. 1811,	120,000
13th March, 1st Sept. 1812,	237,000
16th Jan., 3d April, 24th Aug., 9th Oct., 11th Nov. 1813,	1,040,000
In ten years, exclusive of voluntary enlistment,	2,113,000

Enormous
destruction
of human
life under
his foreign
wars and the
conscription.

CHAP.

L.

1807.

and the despot, who was visibly leading them to perdition, was surrounded on all sides and at all times by the incense of flattery and the voice of adulation.

75.
Excessive
rigour of the
conscription
laws.

So severely, however, did the conscription press upon the natural feelings of the human heart, both in parents and their offspring, that although the salaried dependants of the Emperor, in the legislature and elsewhere, obsequiously voted all his demands for men, and the press lavished nothing but encomiums on his measures, yet it was not without extreme difficulty and excessive rigour that it could be carried into execution, especially in the rural districts of the empire. The infirmities which might be pleaded in exemption were severely scrutinised; and inveterate asthma, habitual spitting of blood, or incipient consumption, was alone sustained as a sufficient excuse. Exemptions at first were allowed to be purchased for three hundred francs; but this privilege was soon repealed, and in the latter years of the empire a substitute could not be procured for less than eight hundred or a thousand pounds. It was not surprising that the price became so high; for it was perfectly understood, what in fact was the case, that it was bribing one man to give his life for another. No Frenchman liable, or who once had been liable, to the conscription, could hold any public office, receive any public salary, exercise any public right, receive any legacy, or inherit any property, unless he could produce a certificate that he had obeyed the law, and was either legally exempted, in actual service, discharged,¹ or that his services had not

¹ Code Napoléon, Art. Conscription, §§ 72, 124.

Brought forward,	2,113,000
Army in existence in 1804,	640,000
Departmental guards, voluntary levies, and levy <i>en masse</i> in 1804,	250,000
	<hr/>
	3,003,000
Remained alive in arms, or prisoners in 1814,	802,600
	<hr/>
Destroyed in ten years,	2,200,400

—See DUPIN, *Force Commerciale de la France*, i. 3; and *Moniteur*, dates *ut supra*.

been required. Those who, when drawn, failed to join the army within the prescribed time, were deprived of their civil rights, and denounced to all the gendarmerie in the empire as deserters.

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1807.

Eleven depots were appointed for the punishment of the refractory, where they wore the uniform of convicts, received their fare, and were employed to labour on fortifications or public works without any pay. The terrors of this treatment, however, being at length found to be insufficient to bring the conscripts to their colours, it was decreed that a deserter or person who failed to attend should be fined fifteen hundred francs, and sentenced to three years' hard labour in the interior, with his head shaved but his beard long; if he deserted from the army, his punishment was to be undergone in a frontier place, where he was sentenced to hard labour for ten years, on bread and water, with a bullet of eight pounds' weight chained to his leg, and with a shaved head and unshaved beard—a penalty in comparison of which death itself was an act of mercy. Such were the punishments which awaited, without distinction, all the youth of France, if they tried to evade a conscription which was cutting them off at the rate of two hundred and twenty thousand a-year. The practical result of this excessive severity, joined to the known impossibility of earning a subsistence in a country where landed property was already subdivided among eight millions of hands, and commercial enterprise annihilated, by any other means than the favour or employment of government, was, that the whole youth of the nation, of the requisite age and capable of undergoing its fatigues, were voluntarily or involuntarily enrolled in the profession of arms.¹

76.
Terrible
punishments
denounced
against the
refractory.

¹ Code Nap.
Art. Con-
scription.
Southey's
Pen. War,
i. 23, 28.

The system of public instruction established in France under the empire was eminently calculated to further the same tendency. The schools were of two kinds, the ecclesiastical schools and the lyceums. The ecclesiastical schools were established by the bishops and clergy, chiefly for the

77.
Imperial
system of
education.
Ecclesiasti-
cal schools,

CHAP.
L.

1807.

Sept. 7.

¹ Thib. Hist.
de Nap. vi.
539, 555.
Southey's
Pen. War,
i. 47, 48.

78.
Constitu-
tion of the
Imperial
University.

education of the young persons destined for their own profession, and in them the elements of grammar were taught along with a system of religious education. As they were supported, however, by voluntary contributions alone, they were few in comparison with the numbers of the people, and totally inadequate for the purposes of national instruction. Such as they were, nevertheless, they excited the jealousy of the Emperor, who was unwilling that any considerable establishment in the empire, especially in relation to so important a matter as public education, should exist independent of the patronage and authority of government. It was decreed, therefore, that there should be no more than one ecclesiastical school allowed in each department; and that one should be in a large town, where a lyceum or government academy was established. All others were to be shut up in a fortnight, under heavy penalties, and their property of every description applied to the use of the great imperial establishment called the University.¹

The Imperial University was the chief instrument which the Emperor had set on foot for obtaining the entire direction of public education in all its branches. This body was totally different from a university in our sense of the term: it was rather a vast system of *instructing police* diffused over the country, in connexion with and dependent on the central government. At its head was placed a grand-master, one of the chief dignitaries of the state, with a salary of 150,000 francs (£6000) a-year. Under him was an ample staff, all of whom were nominated by himself, and extending over the whole empire,—viz. a treasurer and chancellor, ten counsellors for life, twenty in ordinary, and thirty inspectors-general, all endowed with ample salaries. Under them were the rectors of academies, as they were called, who in no respect corresponded to the English functionaries of the same name, but were elevated officers, analogous

to and ranking with the bishop of the diocese, as numerous in the empire as there were courts of appeal, and each possessing an inferior jurisdiction and staff of officers similar to the grand-master. Under each rector were placed the faculties or schools of theology, jurisprudence, medicine, physical sciences, the lyceums, colleges, institutions, and pensions, and even the schools of primary instruction. The teachers in all these various schools were either nominated directly by the grand-master, or by the inspectors, counsellors, or rectors, who owed their appointments to him; so that, directly or indirectly, they were all brought under the control of the central government. Voluntary schools, or communal colleges as they were called, established by the communities or rural divisions of the empire, were not prohibited, and about four hundred of them were set on foot in the early years of the empire. But it was required that every person who taught in them should take out a graduation at the university, and pay for his license to teach from two hundred to six hundred francs every ten years; and besides, that the whole sums which they drew should be thrown into a common fund, to be apportioned out by the central government—not according to the number of the scholars which each could produce, or the expenditure which it might require, but the pleasure of the minister to whom the distribution was confided. Under such restrictions it may easily be believed that the communal or voluntary schools rapidly died away, and nearly the whole education of the empire was brought effectually under the direction and appointment of government.¹

The imperial places of education, which thus, under the successive gradation of schools of primary instruction, colleges, and lyceums, pervaded the whole empire, were the great instrument to which Napoleon trusted, both for the moulding of the national temper into a docile and submissive character, and for the direction of its whole moral energies to the purposes of military aggran-

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L.
1807.

¹ Thib. Hist. de Nap. vi. 540, 558. Southey's Pen. War, i. 44, 47.

79.
Lyceums or military academies. Their regulations and great importance.

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L.
1807.

disement. All the boys who, in the primary schools, evinced talent, spirit, or aptitude for military exploit, were transferred to the colleges, and from thence to the lyceums. In the latter academies everything bore a military character; the pupils were distributed into companies, having each its sergeant and corporal; their studies, their meals, their rising and going to bed, were all performed by beat of drum—from the age of twelve they were taught military exercises; their amusements, their games, were all of a military character. Nor were other encouragements of a more substantial description wanting. To each lyceum one hundred and fifty bursaries were annexed, paid by government, and bestowed on the most deserving and clever of the young pupils, in order to defray their expenses at the higher military academies, or Polytechnic School at Paris. From the many thousand salaried scholars thus chosen, two hundred and fifty were annually transferred to the special military academies, where they were exclusively maintained at the expense of the state, and, when they arrived at the proper age, provided with commissions in the army, or offices in the civil departments of government. Nor was this all—two thousand four hundred youths of the greatest promise were every year selected from the conquered or dependent territories, and educated at the military schools at the public expense; and in like manner apportioned out, according to their disposition and talents, among the military or civil services of the empire.¹

¹ Thib. vi.
540, 547.

80.
And entire
subjection
to the Em-
peror's will.

At all these schools religion was hardly mentioned: political studies were altogether prohibited; moral disquisitions little regarded; but geography, mathematics, mechanics, the physical sciences, fortifications, gunnery, engineering, and whatever was connected directly or indirectly with the art of war, sedulously taught and encouraged. The professors in the lyceums and colleges were bound to celibacy; the primary teachers might

marry, but in that case they were compelled to lodge without the precincts ; a regulation which, to persons of their limited income, seldom exceeding twenty pounds a-year, amounted to a prohibition. All the teachers, of whatever grade, were liable to instant dismissal on the report of the rectors or inspectors, if any of the rules were infringed. Their emoluments were all derived from government, and their promotion depended entirely on the same authority. The scholars were debarred from all correspondence, except with their parents ; and letters even from them could only be received in presence of the master. Thus, not only were the whole schools of the empire directed to the purposes of war or abject submission, and directly placed under the control of government, but a spiritual militia was established in them all, to enforce everywhere the mandates and doctrines which it promulgated. Napoleon did not discourage education ; on the contrary, he laboured assiduously to promote it : but he rendered it wholly and exclusively subservient to his purposes. He did not destroy the battery, but seized its guns, and skilfully turned them on the enemy. Combining into one government all the known modes of degrading mankind, he aimed at, and all but established, a system of despotism unparalleled in its tendency to crush and enslave the human mind. By the conscription he forced, like Timour or Gengis Khan, the whole physical energies of his subjects into the ranks of war, and the prosecution of military aggrandisement ; by the police, the state prisons, and the censorship of the press, he enforced everywhere, like the Byzantine emperors, implicit obedience to his civil administration, and directed at pleasure the thoughts of his subjects ; while, by means of a vast system of centralised education, skilfully directed to the purposes of conquest or despotism, and maintained by an order of educational Jesuits abjectly devoted to his will, he aimed, like Loyola or Hildebrand, at throwing still more indestructible chains over the

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minds of the future generations of mankind. It need hardly be said that the effect of this entire subjection of the human mind to thralldom was the destruction of literary genius. Liberty is its vital air: remove it, and it dies. The pulpit was silent: oratory at the bar, or in the senate, was alike unknown: the graceful flattery of M. Fontanes was alone heard in the legislature: composition became lifeless in every department. Poetry degenerated into conceit, romance into insipidity: the freedom of licentiousness ceased in expression—it remained only in actions. The arts shared in the general degradation. Statuary was little cultivated; and even the genius of David and Gros, fettered by the chains of the empire, ventured only on the expression on canvass of the slavish adulation of its chief, which had penetrated every heart.¹

¹ Thib. vi. 540, 547. Southey, i. 48, 55. Génie de la Rév. i. 392. Thiers, viii. 152, 149.

81.
Rapid transition from republican to despotic ideas.

On one occasion, when the learned and intrepid M. Suard had concluded, in Napoleon's presence, a warm eulogium on the talent with which Tacitus had portrayed the lives and vices of the Roman Emperors, he observed,—"You say well; but he would have done still better if he had told us how it happened that the Roman people tolerated and even loved those bad Emperors. It is that which it would have been of the most importance for posterity to know."² If this observation is just, as it undoubtedly is with reference to the Roman emperors, how much more is it applicable to Napoleon himself; for nothing is more certain than that, in the midst of all this despotic rule, when the Emperor was overturning all the principles of the Revolution, draining France of its heart's blood, and training the generation, educated amidst the fumes of equality, to the degradation of slavery, he was not only tolerated, but almost worshipped by his subjects. This extraordinary change, too, took place, not, as in the Roman empire, after the lapse of centuries, but in one generation. The age of Gracchus was in France instantly succeeded by that of Caligula; the democratic

² De Stael, Rév. Fran. ii. 387.

fervour of the contemporaries of Marius plunged at once into the Eastern adulation of the successors of Constantine.

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In this respect, there is a most remarkable difference between the English and French Revolutions. In both, indeed, a brief period of democratic fervour was succeeded, as it ever must be in an old state, by a military despotism; but the temper with which this change of government was received in the two countries was totally at variance, and the frame of government which has been left in each is essentially different. "The English aristocracy," says Madame de Stael, "had more dignity in their misfortunes than the French; for they did not commit the two immense faults from which the French will never be able to exculpate themselves—the first, that of having united themselves to strangers against their native country; the second, that of having condescended to accept employments in the antechambers of a sovereign who, according to their principles, had no right to the throne."¹ But this remarkable difference was not confined to the aristocracy; all classes in England evinced an early and decided aversion to the violent measures of the army and its chiefs. The nobles and landed proprietors kept aloof from the court of the Protector, neither assisting at his councils nor accepting his repeated offers of lucrative situations; and such was the temper of the Commons, that Cromwell soon found they were totally unmanageable, and therefore disused them as jurymen. In fact they returned such refractory representatives to parliament, that none of the Houses which he summoned were allowed to sit more than a few days.

England, therefore, was overwhelmed by a military usurpation, but the spirit of the nation was not subdued; and even in its gloomiest periods might be seen traces of a free spirit, and growing marks of that independent disposition which waited only for the death of the fortunate usurper to re-establish the national liberties. In

82.
Remarkable
difference
between the
English and
French Re-
volutions in
this respect.

¹ Rév.
Franc. ii.
336.

83.
Universal
alacrity
with which
despotism
was hailed
in France.

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1807.

France, on the other hand, all classes seemed to vie with each other in fawning upon the triumphant conqueror who had subverted the Revolution. The nobles rushed in crowds into his antechambers, and laid the honours of the monarchy at his feet; the burghers vied with each other in obsequious submission to his will, or graceful flattery of his actions; the *tiers-état* joyfully clothed themselves with his titles, or accepted his employment; the peasantry gave him their best blood, and cheerfully yielded up their children to his ambition. The senate was the echo of his sentiments, the council of state the organ of his wishes, the legislative body the register of his mandates. The legislature was submissive, the electors pliant, the jurymen obedient; and in the whole monarchy, so recently convulsed with the fervour of democracy, was to be heard only the mandates of power, the incense of flattery, or the voice of adulation.

84.

Its causes.
Greater violence and
injustice of
the French
convulsion.

Much of this extraordinary difference between the immediate effects of the Revolutions in the two countries is, without doubt, to be ascribed to the greater devastation, more sweeping changes, and deeper guilt of the French convulsion. The bloody proscriptions and unbounded confiscations of the popular party, were the cause which at once occasioned and justified the emigration of the noblesse. Though political wisdom, equally as true patriotism, should have forbidden their uniting their arms, under any circumstances, with the stranger against their native land; yet some allowance must be made for the lacerated feelings of men first driven into exile by a bloodthirsty faction, and then deprived of their estates and reduced to beggary, because they declined to return and place their necks under the guillotine. We can sympathise with the implacable vengeance of those who had seen their parents, brothers, sisters, or children, massacred by an inhuman party, who, by rousing the cupidity of the working-classes, had succeeded in establishing the most infernal despotism in their country that

had ever disgraced mankind. The excessive misery, too, which democratic ascendancy had produced upon all ranks, and especially the lowest, induced, as its natural result, that universal and ardent desire for the establishment of a powerful and energetic government, which woful experience had proved to be the only practicable mode of terminating the general calamities. The reaction of order and tranquillity against republican violence and misery, was more powerful and wide-spread in France than in England, because the suffering which had preceded it had been more acute and universal. The despotism of Napoleon was more oppressive and more willingly acquiesced in than that of Cromwell, from the same causes which had rendered the atrocities of the revolutionists in France more excessive than those of the republicans in England.

But, after making every allowance for the weight and importance of these circumstances, it is evident that something more is required to explain the extraordinary change in the national disposition which took place from the days of the Revolution to those of the Empire. That suffering should produce an alteration of opinion in regard to the merits of the changes which had occasioned it—that the now universally felt evils of democratic government should incline all classes to range themselves under the banner of a single chief, is indeed intelligible, and in truth nothing more than the operation of experience upon the great body of mankind. But that this experience should produce individual baseness—that the madness of republicanism should be succeeded, not by the caution of wisdom, but the adulation of selfishness—and that the riot of European liberty should plunge at once into the servility of Eastern despotism, is the extraordinary thing. It is in vain to seek the explanation of this phenomenon in the influence of an extraordinary man, or the mingled sway of the ambitious passions which an unprecedented career of success had brought to bear

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85.

But this
alone will
not explain
the differ-
ence.

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L.

1807.

upon the nation. These circumstances will never at once alter the character of a people: they cannot convert public spirit into selfishness; they cannot do the work of centuries of decline, or change the age of Fabricius into that of Nero.

86.
It was not
the love of
freedom, but
the desire of
elevation,
which con-
vulsed
France.

An attentive consideration of these particulars must, with every impartial mind, lead to the conclusion that it was not the genuine spirit of freedom which convulsed France and desolated Europe, but the bastard passion for individual elevation. Both these passions are, indeed, essential to a successful struggle in the later stages of society in favour of liberty, because such a struggle requires the general concurrence of mankind; and such concurrence, except in cases of extraordinary fervour or rural simplicity, is only to be gained by the combined influence of the selfish and the generous passions of our nature. But everything in the final result depends on the proportion in which these noble and base ingredients are mingled in the public mind. In either case, if democracy becomes triumphant, suffering will be induced, and a reaction must ensue. But if the generous flame of liberty is the ruling passion, the period of despotic sway and military force will be one of indignant silence, convinced reason, or compulsory submission. If the selfish passion for distinction, or the ardent thirst for authority, is the moving power, it will be distinguished by the baseness of servility, the lust of corruption, the rhetoric of adulation.

87.
Selfishness
generally
prevailing
was the
cause of
this.

The reason is obvious. In the excesses of power, whether regal, aristocratic, or republican, the disinterested friends of freedom, either in the conservative or liberal ranks, can discover nothing but a matter of unqualified hatred and aversion; but the aspirants after distinction, the candidates for power, the covetous of gold, find in those very excesses the precise objects of their desire, provided only that their benefits accrue to themselves. If, therefore, from the temper of the public

mind, it has become evident that democratic anarchy can no longer be maintained, and that the stern sway of authority has, for a season at least, become unavoidable, the selfish and corrupt hasten to throw themselves into its arms, and lavish that flattery on the single which they formerly bestowed on the many-headed despot. They do so in the hope that they may thus secure to themselves the real objects of their ambition; while the virtuous and patriotic retire altogether from public life, and seek in the privacy of retirement that innocence which can no longer be found in the prominent stations of the world. Then is the period when the indignant lines of the poet are indeed applicable—

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1807.

“When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honour is a private station.”

That the spirit of freedom was at no period the ruling passion of the French Revolution has been declared by all its observers, and clearly demonstrated by the events of its progress. Napoleon and Madame de Stael have concurred in stating, that the desire for equality was the moving principle; and this desire, in an advanced age, is but another name for the selfish passion for individual aggrandisement. Men profess, and for the time perhaps feel, a desire that all should start equal, in order that their own chance of being foremost in the race should be improved; but if they can turn the advantage to their own side, they are in no hurry to share it with those whom they have outstripped. The most ardent of the French revolutionists showed, by their subsequent conduct, that they had no sort of objection to the most invidious and exclusive distinctions being re-established, provided only that they were conceived in their own favour. The remarkable and luminous fact, that not one of the successive factions which rose to power in the course of the convulsion, ever thought either of limiting the period within which an accused party might be detained

88.
The principles of freedom never were attended to in the French Revolution.

CHAP. in prison without being brought to trial, or abolishing the
 L. odious and degrading fetters of the police, or securing to
 1807. the minority, in opposition to the ruling power, the means
 of influencing public opinion by a practically free press,
 and the undisturbed right of assembling to discuss the
 measures of government in public meetings, affords insur-
 mountable proofs that nothing was ever further from
 their real intentions than the establishment of the prin-
 ciples of genuine freedom.

89.
 It was no-
 thing but a
 vehement
 struggle for
 power.

All these parties, indeed, when struggling for power, were loud in their demand for these essential guarantees to liberty, without the full establishment of which its blessings must ever be an empty name ; but none, when they attained it, ever thought of carrying their principles into practice. They never proposed to put that bit in their own mouths which they had been so desirous of placing in those of their antagonists. None of them evinced the slightest hesitation in taking advantage of, and straining to the utmost, those arbitrary powers which, by common consent, seemed to be left at the disposal of the executive government. The conclusion is unavoidable, that throughout the whole period it was selfish ambition which was the real principle of action ; and that, if the love of freedom existed at all, it glowed in so inconsiderable a number of breasts as to be altogether incapable of producing any durable impression on the national fortunes. Nor is this surprising, when it is recollected in what an advanced age of society, and among what a corrupted, and, above all, irreligious people the Revolution broke out. The degrees in which the spirit of public freedom and the desire of private aggrandisement will be mingled in every democratic convulsion, must always be almost entirely dependent on the proportion in which the generous and disinterested, or the selfish and grasping passions, previously prevail in the public mind. And, without disputing the influence of other causes, it may safely be affirmed that the main cause of the difference is to be

found in the prevalence or the disregard of religious feeling ; that it is in its ascendancy that the only effectual safeguard can be found against the temptations to evil which arise during the progress of social conflicts ; and that of all desperate attempts, the most hopeless is to rear the fabric of civil liberty or public virtue on any other basis than that Faith which alone is able to overcome the inherent principles of corruption in the human heart.

Of all the manifold and lasting evils which the thorough ascendancy of democratic power, even for a short time, produces, perhaps the most lamentable, and that of which France, under the empire, afforded the most memorable example, is the utter corruption of public opinion and confusion of ideas which it necessarily induces, terminating at last in the general application to public actions of no other test but that of success. The way in which this deplorable consequence ensues is very apparent, and it points in the clearest manner to the principle on which alone a good government can be formed. Where property is the ruling, and numbers the controlling power, the opinion of the multitude is necessarily, in the general case, in favour of a virtuous administration, and adverse to the corruptions or oppression of government, because the majority have nothing to gain by such abuses ; and where private interest does not intervene, it will always, as in a theatre, be on the side of virtue. However much disposed the holders of authority in such a state may be unduly to extend its limits, or apply it to their own private purposes as well as the public service, they are prevented from pushing such abuses to any great excess by the watchful jealousy of the popular classes in the state. But when the people are themselves, or by means of their demagogues, in possession, not merely of the power of controlling and watching the government, but of actually directing its movements and sharing in its profits, this salutary and indispensable check is at once destroyed.

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1807.

90.
General
corruption
of public
opinion
which the
French
Revolution
produced.

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L.

1807.

91.

The democratic party, when in power, support every abuse, because they profit by it.

From being the determined enemies, the democratic body become at once, when installed in power, the most decided supporters of every species of corruption, because they profit by its effects; and although the opposite party, now excluded from office, may be loud in their condemnation of such proceedings, yet, being overthrown in the conflict, they are no longer able to influence the measures of government. Being a small minority in the state, they are not, at least till after the lapse of a very long period, able to bring over the majority to their sentiments, or form that general concurrence which can properly be called public opinion. In the interim every species of abuse is not only practised but loudly applauded by the democratic partisans, now interested in their continuance; and hence, not only the destruction of that invaluable check, which, under other circumstances, the opinion of the majority in opposition forms to the misdeeds of the few in power, but the total corruption and depravation of the feeling with regard to public matters of that majority itself. The restraining has now become the moving power; the check upon evil the stimulant to corruption; the fly-wheel, instead of the regulator of the machine, the headlong force which is to hurl it to destruction. Such is the extent of this evil, and such the rapidity with which, under the combined influence of temptation to themselves and impotence in their adversaries, the tyrant majority are seduced into depraved principles and a course of iniquity, that it may perhaps be pronounced the greatest, because the most lasting and irremediable, of the evils of democratic government.

92.

Rapid growth of centralisation in this state of public feeling.

CENTRALISATION, in such a state of public feeling, is the great enemy which freedom has to dread, because it is the one which addresses itself to the principles that possess the most durable sway over the human heart. More than military force or anarchical misrule, it has in every age completed the downfall of real liberty. If such

a withering system is attempted in the healthful state of the body politic — that is, where property and education are the ruling, and numbers and popular zeal the controlling power — it will always experience the most decided opposition from the natural jealousy of government on the part of all who do not participate in its advantages. Except in extraordinary circumstances, it is not likely to meet with any considerable success. But the case is widely different when the democratic rulers are themselves in power. Centralisation then goes on at a swift pace; and for a very obvious reason, that both the necessities of government, the interests of its democratic supporters, and the experienced evils of the popular election of public functionaries, concur in recommending it. The executive being erected on the ruins, or against the wishes, of the holders of property, has nothing to expect from their support, and therefore is fain to extend its influence, and provide for its numerous and needy followers, by the multiplication of offices all in the appointment of the central government. The popular leaders, hoping to profit largely by this accumulation of official patronage in the hands of their chiefs, not only in noways oppose, but give their most cordial support to the same system. Meanwhile the great mass of the people, disgusted with the weak or corrupt administration of the municipal or local functionaries who owed their elevation to popular election, rapidly and inevitably glide into the opinion, that no mode of appointment can be so bad as that under the evils of which they are now suffering, and that a practically good government can never be attained till the disposal of all offices of any importance is vested in the executive authority.

Thus all classes, though for very different reasons, concur in supporting the system of centralisation—a system, nevertheless, which, though doubtless often productive of improvement in the outset in practical administration and local government, is the most formidable enemy in

93.
Debasing
effects of
centralisa-
tion when
generally
established.

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the end which the cause of freedom has to combat, and the one against which, therefore, it behoves its real friends in an especial manner to be on their guard. The anarchy which is the first effect of democratic ascendancy, necessarily and rapidly terminates in military despotism: that despotism itself, from its brutality and violence, cannot, in any well-informed state, be of very long endurance. But the irresistible sway of a centralised government, established by a democratic executive, and sustained by the aid of selfish support from the popular party, may finally crush the spirit and extinguish all the blessings of freedom, by removing all the practical evils which preceding convulsions had occasioned, enlisting alike the friends of order and the partisans of democracy in its ranks, and engaging the most influential portion of the people by interested motives in its support. It was neither the vengeance of Marius nor the proscriptions of Sylla, neither the aristocracy of Pompey nor the genius of Cæsar, which finally prostrated the liberties of Rome; it was the centralised government of Augustus which framed the chains that could never be shaken off. There is the ultimate and deadly foe of freedom; there the enemy, ever ready to break in and reap the last spoils of the discord and infatuation of others. And wherever such a centralised system has grown up in an old-established state, after a severe course of democratic suffering, it is not going too far to assert that the cause of freedom is utterly hopeless, and that the seeds of death are implanted in the community.*

Striking
opinion of
M. de Toc-
queville on
this subject.

* I am happy to find this opinion, which I have long entertained, supported by the great authority of M. de Tocqueville. "If absolute power," says he, "should re-establish itself, in whatever hands, in any of the democratic states of Europe, I have no doubt it would assume a new form unknown to our fathers. When the great families and the spirit of clanship prevailed, the individual who had to contend with tyranny never felt himself alone; he was supported by his clients, his relations, his friends. But when his estates are divided, and races are confounded, where shall we find the spirit of family? What force will remain in the influence of habit among a people changing perpetually, where every act of tyranny will find a precedent in previous disorders, where every crime can be justified by an example; where nothing exists of sufficient anti-

It is in these predisposing circumstances that we must look for the real causes, not merely of the despotism of Napoleon, but of the ready reception which it met with from all classes, and the alacrity with which the fervent passions of democracy were converted at once into the debasing servility of Asiatic despotism. The Republican writers fall into the most palpable error when they accuse that great man of having overturned the principles of the Revolution, and of being the real cause of its terminating in the establishment of arbitrary power. So far from it, he carried out these principles to their natural and unavoidable result; he did no more than reap the harvest, from the crop which had been sown by other and very different hands. The real authors of the despotism of Napoleon were those who overturned the monarchy of Louis. It was Sièyes and Mirabeau, and the enthusiastic spirits of the Constituent Assembly, who set in motion the chain of causes and effects which necessarily, in their final result, induced the chains of the empire.

Doubtless, Napoleon availed himself with great skill of the extraordinary combination of circumstances which had thus in a manner presented despotism to his grasp. The leading principles of his government, as Madame de Stael has well observed, were to respect studiously the *interests* which the Revolution had created, to turn its *passions* into the career of military conquest or civil ambition, to open the career of success alike to all who deserved it, and to rule public opinion by a skilful use

quity to render its destruction an object of dread, and nothing can be figured so new that men are afraid to engage in it? What resistance would manners afford which have already received so many shocks? What could public opinion do, when there do not exist twenty persons bound together by any common tie—when you can no more meet with a man, a family, a body corporate, or a class of society, which could represent or act upon that opinion—when each citizen is equally poor, equally impotent, equally isolated, and can only oppose his individual weakness to the *organised strength of the central government*? To figure anything analogous to the despotism which would then be established amongst us, we would require to recur to our own annals—we would be forced to recur to the frightful periods of Roman tyranny, when, manners

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94.

It was the
Republicans
who destroy-
ed freedom
in France.

95.

Ability with
which Na-
poleon took
advantage
of these cir-
cumstances
to establish
despotic
power.

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¹ Rev.
Franç. ii.
255.

of the influence of the press.¹ No maxims more likely to govern an active, energetic, and corrupted people, could possibly have been devised: but still they would have failed in producing the desired effect, and the attempt to enslave France would have proved abortive, even in his able hands, if success had not been rendered certain by the madness and guilt which preceded him. And in executing the mission on which he firmly believed he was sent—the closing the wounds and putting a stop to the horrors of the Revolution—we are not to imagine that he was to blame, so far at least as his domestic government was concerned. On the contrary, he took the only measures which remained practicable to restrain its excesses, or put a period to its suffering; and subsequent experience has abundantly proved that every government which was founded on any other principles, or practically gave the people any share of that power for which they had so passionately contended, involved in itself the seeds of its speedy destruction.

96.

But this, however great an evil, was unavoidable in the state in which France was on the termination of the Revolution.

And although nothing can be more certain than that centralisation is the ultimate extinguisher of freedom, and the insidious foe which, elevated on its triumphs, is finally destructive of its principles, yet it is not, in such a state of society as that of France in the time of Napoleon, to be regarded as an evil which it was the duty of a real patriot to resist. As long indeed as the elements of freedom exist in a state—that is, as long as the higher and middle classes retain their public spirit and their posses-

being corrupted, old recollections effaced, habits destroyed, opinions wavering, liberty deprived of its asylum under the laws, could no longer find a place of refuge; where, no guarantee existing for the citizens, and they having none for themselves, men in power made a sport of the people, and princes wore out the clemency of the heavens rather than the patience of their subjects. They are blind indeed who look after democratic equality for the monarchy of Henry IV. or Louis XIV. For my own part, when I reflect on the state to which many European nations have already arrived, and that to which others are fast tending, I am led to believe that soon there will be no place among them but for *democratic equality or the tyranny of the Cæsars*.”—TOCQUEVILLE, ii. 258, 259. What a picture of the effects of democratic triumph from a liberal writer, himself an eye-witness of its effects!

sions—it is impossible that public jealousy can be too strongly aroused on this subject, or that it can be too strongly impressed upon the people, that if all the interests of the state are centred in the hands of the executive, be it monarchical or democratic, the extinction not only of the rights but of the spirit of freedom is at hand, and nothing remains to the state but an old age of decrepitude and decline. But if the people would shun these evils, they must pause on the threshold of their career, and avoid the destruction of the property or influence of those classes inferior to the throne, though superior to themselves, whose influence forms an essential ingredient in the composition of public freedom. The English did so. The rights of the middle ranks, the church, and the aristocracy, survived the triumphs of Cromwell, and in consequence two hundred years of liberty have been enjoyed by the British nation. The French did not do so: the church, the middle ranks, and the aristocracy, were utterly destroyed during the fervour of the Revolution; and the result has been, that, notwithstanding all their subsequent sufferings, they have not enjoyed one hour of real freedom.

Many struggles have ensued, and may ensue, for the possession of supreme power; many revolutions of the palace have shaken, and may hereafter shake the fabric of their society; but no attempt has been made, or will be made, to limit the power of their executive, or extend the liberty of their people. The centralised despotic government of Napoleon still remains untouched—the question with all parties is, not whether its powers shall be restrained, but who shall direct them. Universal suffrage itself affords no sort of security against such a result: the *quasi* monarchy of Louis Napoleon was established in France in 1849 by a majority of *four millions* of electors, within a year of the communist and socialist fervour of 1848. The more popular and democratic the faction is which gains the ascendancy, the more formidable does the action of the state machine become, because the weaker

97.
Despotic
power has
ever since
been estab-
lished in
France.

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is the counteracting force which is to restrain its motions. If the extreme democratic party were to succeed to power, the force of the centralised government, based on the support of the people, would, in a short time, become wellnigh insupportable. In the triumphs which they achieved, and the crimes which they committed, the early Revolutionists poured the poison which ever proves fatal to freedom through the veins of their country ; with their own hands they dug the grave of its liberties. Nothing remained to their descendants but to lie down and receive their doom. When this last deplorable effect has taken place, it becomes the duty of the patriot no longer to resist the centralising system ; but to support it as the only species of administration under which, since freedom is unattainable, the minor advantage of a tranquil despotism can be attained.

98.

Ultimate
effect on
general free-
dom of re-
sistance to
democracy
in England,
and its tri-
umph in
France.

It was a rule in one of the republics of antiquity, that no public monument should be voted to any person who had been engaged in the administration of affairs till ten years after his death, in order that the ultimate effect of his measures, whether for good or for evil, should be first fully developed. Judging by this principle, to how few characters in the French Revolution will the friends of freedom in future times rear a mausoleum ; to how many will the abettors of arbitrary power, if their real opinions could be divulged, be inclined to erect statues ! Looking forward for the short period of only eighteen years, not a month in the lifetime of a nation, and seeing in the servility and sycophancy of the empire the necessary effects of the vehemence and injustice of the Constituent Assembly, what opinion are we to form of the self-styled patriots and philosophers of the day, who thus, in so short a time, blasted the prospects and withered the destiny of their country ? Who were the real friends of freedom ? Mr Pitt and Mr Burke, who, by combating the ambition of democracy and coercing its extravagance in this country, have bequeathed to their descendants the

glorious and enduring fabric of British liberty ; or Mirabeau and Danton, who, by achieving for its votaries a bloody triumph on the banks of the Seine, plunged their children and all succeeding ages into the inextricable fetters of a centralised despotism ? It is fitting, doubtless, that youth should rejoice ; but it is fitting, also, that manhood should be prosperous and old age contented ; and the seducers, whether of individuals or nations, are little to be commended, who, taking advantage of the passions of early years or the simplicity of inexperience, precipitate their victims into a course of iniquity, and lead them, through a few months of vicious indulgence or delirious excitement, to a life of suffering and an old age of contempt !

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CHAPTER LI.

SETTLEMENT OF EUROPE AFTER THE TREATY OF TILSIT.
JULY 1807—JANUARY 1808.

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LI.
1807.
I.
General
suffering and
dismay pro-
duced in
Russia by
the treaty
of Tilsit.

IF the treaty of Tilsit was productive of glory to the Emperor Napoleon, and transport and opulence to the citizens of his victorious capital, it was the commencement of a period of suffering, ignominy, and bondage to the other capitals and countries of continental Europe. Russia, it was true, had extricated herself unscathed from the strife; her military renown had suffered no diminution on the field of Eylau, or in the struggle of Friedland; it was apparent to all the world that she had been overpowered by banded Europe, not conquered by France in the strife. But still she had failed in the object of the war. Her arms, instead of being advanced to the Rhine, were thrown back to the Niemen; in indignant silence her warriors had re-entered their country, and surrendered to their irresistible rivals the mastery of western Europe. If the Czar had been seduced by the artifices of Napoleon, or dazzled by the halo of glory which encircled his brows; if the army was proud of having so long arrested, with inferior forces, the conqueror before whom the Austrian and Prussian monarchies had sunk to the dust, the nobles were not carried away by the general illusion. They saw clearly, amidst the flattery which was lavished on their rulers, the gilded chains which were imposed on their country.

They could not disguise from themselves that France had not only acquired by this treaty an irresistible preponderance in western and central Europe, but subjected Russia herself to her command; that the price to the empire of the Czar, at which all the advantages of the treaty had been purchased, was its accession to the Continental System, and the closing of its ports to the ships of Great Britain; and that thus not only were they likely to be deprived of half their wonted revenue from their estates, by losing the principal market for their produce, but compelled to contribute to the aggrandisement of a rival empire, already too powerful for their independence, and which, it was foreseen, would ere long aim a mortal stroke at their national existence. So strong and universal were these feelings among the whole aristocratic and commercial circles, that when General Savary, whom Napoleon had chosen as his ambassador at the Russian capital, on account of the address he had exhibited, and the favour with which he had been received by Alexander at the time of the battle of Austerlitz,¹ arrived at St Petersburg, he experienced, by his own avowal, the utmost difficulty in finding any furnished hotel where he could obtain admission; and during the first six weeks of his stay there, though he was overwhelmed with attentions from the Emperor, he did not receive one invitation from any of the nobility. While he saw the guests whom he met at the palace depart in crowds to the balls and concerts of that scene of festivity, he himself returned, mortified and disconsolate, from the imperial table to his own apartments.²*

¹ *Ante*, ch. xl. § 139.

² Savary, iii. 98, 100. Hard. x. 28, 29.

* In Savary's case the general aversion to the cause of France was increased by the part which he was known to have taken in the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, which had been one of the leading causes of the irritation that led to the war. Napoleon, charmed at having extricated himself with credit from so perilous and unprofitable a contest, gave the most positive injunctions to his envoy at the Russian court at all hazards to avoid its renewal. "I have just concluded peace," said he to Savary: "they tell me I have done wrong, and that I shall repent it; but, by my faith, we have had enough of war—we must give repose to the world. I am going to send you to St Petersburg as chargé-d'affaires till an ambassador is appointed. You will have the direction of my

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2.

General
feeling of
despondence
which pre-
vailed in
Great
Britain.

In the British dominions the disastrous intelligence produced a different, but perhaps still more mournful impression. England was, by her maritime superiority, relieved from the apprehensions of immediate danger, and the general resolution to maintain the contest continued unabated; but a feeling of despondence pervaded the public mind, and the strife was persevered in rather with the sternness of dogged resistance, or from a sense of the impossibility of making a secure accommodation, than from any hope that the war could be brought to a successful issue. This general impression cannot be better portrayed than in the words of Sir James Mackintosh, the able champion, in its earlier days, of the French Revolution:—"I do not indeed despair of the human race; but the days and nights of mighty revolutions have not yet been measured by human intellect. Though the whole course of human affairs may be towards a better state, experience does not justify us in supposing that many steps of the progress may not be immediately for the worse. The race of man may at last reach the promised land; but there is no assurance that the present generation will not perish in the wilderness. The prospect of the nearest part of futurity, of all that we can discover, is very dismal. The mere establishment of absolute power in France is the least part of the evil: it might be necessary for a time to moderate the vibrations of the pendulum in that agitated state; but what are the external effects of these convulsions? Europe is now

affairs there: lay it down as the ruling principle of your conduct that any further contest is to be avoided; nothing would displease me so much as to be involved in that quarter in fresh embarrassments. Talleyrand will tell you what to do, and what has been arranged between the Emperor of Russia and me. I am about to give repose to the army in the country we have conquered, and to enforce payment of the contributions; that is the only difficulty which I anticipate; but regulate yourself by this principle, that *I will on no account be again drawn into a contest*. Never speak of war; in conversation studiously avoid everything which may give offence; contravene no usage; ridicule no custom. Neglect nothing which may draw closer and perpetuate the bonds of alliance now contracted with that country."—SAVARY, iii. 96, 97; and HARDENBERG, x. 29.

covered with a multitude of dependent despots, whose existence depends on their maintaining the paramount tyranny in France. *The mischief has become too intricate to be unravelled in our day*; an evil greater than despotism, or rather the worst and most hideous form of despotism, approaches; a monarchy literally universal seems about to be established; then all the spirit, variety, and emulation of separate nations, which the worst forms of internal government have not utterly extinguished, will vanish. And in that state of things, if we may judge from past examples, the whole energy of human intellect and virtue will languish, and can scarce be revived otherwise than by an infusion of barbarism.”¹

Such were the anticipations of the greatest intellects of the age, even among those who had originally been most favourable to the democratic principle, and that, too, on the eve of the Peninsular campaigns, and at no great distance from the general resurrection of Europe after the Moscow retreat—a memorable example of the fallacy of any political conclusions founded upon the supposed durability of the causes at any one time in operation; and of the oblivion of that provision for the remedy of intolerable evils, by the reaction of mankind against the suffering of these, and of the general intermixture of the principles of good and evil in human affairs, which, as it is the most general lesson to be deduced from history, so is it fitted above all others to inspire moderation in prosperous and constancy in adverse affairs.

The political changes consequent in central Europe on the treaty of Tilsit were speedily developed. On his route to Paris, Napoleon met a deputation of eight of the principal nobles, in the French interest, of Prussian Poland at Dresden; and Talleyrand, in a few days, produced a constitution for the grand-duchy, calculated, as he thought, at once to satisfy the general wish for a restoration of their nationality, and to accord with the despotic views of the Emperors of the East and West. By

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¹ Sir James Mackintosh to W. Ogilvie, Feb. 24, 1808. Mem. i. 383, 384.

3.
Constitution for the Grand-duchy of Warsaw.

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LI.

1807.

this deed, which was produced with more than usual rapidity even in those days of constitution-manufacture, the ducal crown was declared to be hereditary in the Saxon family: the grand-duke was invested with the whole executive power, and he alone had the privilege of proposing laws to the diet, with whom the prerogative remained of passing or rejecting them. This diet was composed of a senate of eighteen, named by the grand-duke, embracing six bishops and twelve lay nobles, and a chamber of deputies of a hundred members; sixty being appointed by the nobility, and forty by the burghs. The chambers, like those at Paris, were doomed to silence; they could only decide on the arguments laid before them, on the part of the government, by the orators of the council of state, and of the chambers by commissions appointed by them. This mockery of a parliament was to assemble only once in two years, and then to sit but fifteen days. The ardent plebeian noblesse of Poland, whose democratic passions had so long brought desolation on their country, found little in these enactments to gratify their wishes; but a substantial, though perhaps precipitate improvement was made in the condition of the peasantry, by a clause declaring that the whole serfs were free. No time, however, was left for reflection; the deputies were constrained to accept it; and the new constitution of Poland was not only framed, but sworn to at Dresden during the brief period of Napoleon's sojourn there on his route to Paris.¹

July 22.
1 Hard. ix.
448, 449.
Bign. vi.
387, 388.
Lucches.
ii. 14, 19.

4.
Constitution
of the king-
dom of
Westphalia.
Dec. 15.

The constitution given to the infant kingdom of Westphalia was, in like manner, framed entirely upon the model of that of France. It contained a king, council of state, senate, silent aristocratic legislature, and public orators, cast like all those at this period from the Parisian mould. The throne was declared hereditary in the family of Jerome Buonaparte, the Emperor's brother, and the first sovereign; one half of the allodial territories of the

former sovereigns, of which the new kingdom was composed, was placed at the disposal of Napoleon, as a fund from which to form estates for his military followers; provision was made for payment of the contributions levied by France, before any part of the revenue was obtained by the new sovereign; the kingdom was directed to form part of the Confederation of the Rhine, and its military contingent, drawn from a population of about two millions of souls, fixed at twenty-five thousand men: in default of heirs-male of his body, the succession to the throne was to devolve on Napoleon and his heirs by birth or adoption. Every corporate right and privilege was abolished; trial by jury and in open court introduced in criminal cases; all exclusive privileges and exemptions from taxation annulled; the nobility preserved, but deprived of their former invidious rights. The chamber of deputies consisted of a hundred members, of whom seventy were chosen from the landed aristocracy, fifteen from the commercial, and fifteen from the literary classes. Salutary changes! if the equality which they were calculated to induce was the enjoyment of equal rights and general security; but utterly fatal to freedom, if they were only fitted to introduce an equality of servitude, and disable any individuals or associated bodies from taking the lead in the contest for the public liberties with the executive power.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 783.
State Pa-
pers. Bign.
vi. 389, 390.
Mart. viii.
723. Sup.
iv. 493.

The states of the Rhenish confederacy had flattered themselves that the general peace concluded on the shores of the Niemen would finally deliver them from the scourge of warlike armaments and military contributions. But they were soon cruelly undeceived. Shortly after the general pacification, and before they had recovered from the burden of maintaining, clothing, and lodging the numerous corps of the Grand Army which traversed their territories on the road to the Rhine, they were overwhelmed by the entry of a fresh body of forty thousand men, who issued from France, and took the route to the

5.
Oppressive
military
government
of the Con-
federation
of the Rhine
and Hanse
Towns.

September.

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LI.

1807.
October.

Vistula, still at the sole expense of the allied states. They were speedily followed by a large body of Spaniards drawn from Italy, and which went to augment the corps of Romana, under the orders of Bernadotte, on the shores of the Baltic; a sad omen for succeeding times, when the conclusion of peace was immediately succeeded by fresh irruptions of armed men, and burdensome preparations, at the cost of the allied states, for future hostilities. It soon appeared that the stipulations in favour of the conquered territories in the formal treaties were to be a mere empty name. It had been provided at Tilsit that Dantzic was to be a free city, governed by its own magistrates; but Rapp, the new governor, was speedily introduced at the head of a numerous French garrison, who summarily expelled the Prussian authorities and great part of the inhabitants, and began the rigorous enforcement of the French military contributions and the Continental System. The same system of government was sternly acted upon in Hamburg, Bremen, Lübeck, and all the Hanse Towns; Bourrienne continued to enforce it with such severity at Hamburg, that the trade of the place was entirely ruined, and large sums were remitted by him quarterly to the Tuileries out of the last fruits of the commercial enterprise of the Hanse Towns.¹

¹ Bour. vii.
231, 240.
Hard. ix.
442, 443.
Lucches. ii.
14, 17.

6.
Excessive
rigour of the
treatment
which Prus-
sia experi-
enced.
July 12.

But most of all did the ruthless hand of conquest fall with unmitigated rigour on the inhabitants of Prussia. Hard as their lot appeared to be, as it was chalked out in the treaty of Tilsit, it was yet enviable compared to that which, in the course of the pacification which followed, actually ensued from the oppressive exactions of the French government and the unbounded insolence of its soldiery. Immediately after the conclusion of the treaty which reft them of half their dominions, the King and Queen repaired to Memel, where they were compelled to sign a fresh convention, which, under pretext of providing for the liquidation of the contributions and speedy evacuation of their territories, in effect subjected them, without

any prospect of relief, to those intolerable burdens. By this treaty it was provided that the evacuation of the fortresses, with the exception of Stettin, Cüstrin, and Glogau, should take place before the 1st November; but this only on the condition that the whole contributions were previously paid up—a condition which it was well known could not be complied with, as they amounted to above four times the revenue of the whole kingdom before its dismemberment,* in addition to the burden of feeding, clothing, paying, and lodging above one hundred and fifty thousand men, for which no credit was given in estimating their amount by the French commissaries. By a second convention, concluded at Elbing three months afterwards, the unhappy monarch, instead of the single military road through his territories from Dresden to Warsaw, stipulated by the treaty of Tilsit, was compelled to allow five passages, two for troops, and three for commercial purposes, to Saxony, Poland, and their respective allies—a stipulation which in effect cut his dominions through the middle, and subjected the inhabitants on these roads to unnumbered exactions and demands both from the French and allied troops. Rapp, soon after, instead of a territory of two leagues in breadth around the walls of Dantzic, as provided in the treaty, seized upon one two German miles, or eight English miles broad, counting from the extreme point of its outworks; while by a third convention, in the beginning of November, Prussia was not only forced to cede to the Grand-duchy of Warsaw New Silesia and the circle of Michelau,—no inconsiderable addition to the losses, already enormous, imposed by the treaty of Tilsit,—but to ratify the ample grants out of the hereditary revenues of the Prussian crown, made by the Emperor Napoleon in favour of Berthier, Mortier, and others of his military chiefs.¹

CHAP.
LI.
1807.

Oct. 13.

Nov. 5.

¹ Hard. ix.
451, 454.
Mart. viii.
668, 646,
and Sup. iv.
452, 474.

* They amounted to 600,000,000 francs, or £24,000,000, and the revenue of Prussia, before the war, was about £6,000,000.—See *ante*, Chap. XLVI, § 77, note.

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LI.

1807.

7.

Fresh requisitions imposed on Prussia, and limitation of its regular forces.

Vexatious as these fresh demands were, and cruelly as their bitterness was aggravated by the arrogant manner in which compliance was demanded by the French authorities, they were inconsiderable compared to the enormous burden of the military requisitions which, from this time till the opening of the Russian campaign, perpetually drained away all the resources of Prussia. Not content with the crushing exactions, to the amount of six hundred millions of francs (£24,000,000,) already imposed during the war, Daru, the French receiver-general for the north of Germany, brought forward after the peace fresh claims to the amount of 154,000,000 (£6,160,000); and although that able functionary, on the earnest representations of the King, consented to take 35,000,000 francs off this requisition, the French minister Champagny, by the directions of Napoleon, raised it again to the original sum. It was at length, at the earnest intercession of the Emperor Alexander, fixed at one hundred and forty millions (£5,600,000,) and Glogau, Stettin, and Cüstrin were pledged for its final liquidation, on condition that, till that took place, a French corps of ten thousand men should be put in possession of these fortresses, and maintained there entirely at the expense of Prussia. All this was exclusive of the cost of feeding, paying, and clothing the whole French troops still on or passing through the Prussian territory, who were not under a hundred thousand men. In addition to this, the King was obliged to bind himself not to keep on foot, for the next ten years, more than forty-two thousand men. Thus, while his territory was intersected in every direction by military chaussées for the benefit of his enemies, his chief fortresses still in their hands, and his subjects oppressed by the merciless exactions of a prodigious army, quartered apparently permanently upon their industry, his own troops were reduced to so low an amount as to be barely equal to the collection of the revenue required by so vast a host of depredators. To complete the picture of his misfor-

tunes, the King was immediately compelled to adopt the Continental System, and declare war against Great Britain—a measure which, by exposing his harbours to blockade, and totally destroying his foreign commerce, seemed to render utterly hopeless the discharge of the overwhelming pecuniary burdens with which his kingdom was loaded.¹

CHAP.
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1807.

¹ Hard. ix.
453, 455.
Mart. Sup.
iv. 452, 474,
483.

To all human appearance, the power of Prussia was now completely destroyed, and the monarchy of the Great Frederick seemed to be bound in fetters more strict and galling than had ever, in modern times, been imposed on an independent state. And doubtless, if these misfortunes had fallen on a people and a government not endowed in the highest degree with the spirit of patriotism and constancy in misfortune, this effect would have taken place. But adversity is the true test of political as well as private virtue, and those external calamities which utterly crush the feeble or degenerate, serve only to animate the exertions, and draw forth the energy of the uncorrupted portion of mankind. While the diplomatists of Europe were speculating on the entire extinction of Prussia as an independent power, and the only question appeared to be, to what fortunate neighbour the remnant of her territories would be allotted, a new and improved system of administration was adopted in all the branches of her government, and the foundation was laid in present suffering and humiliation of future elevation and glory. Instead of sinking in despair under the misfortunes by which they were oppressed, the King and his ministers were only roused by them to additional exertions to sustain the public fortunes. While doing so, however, he had fresh mortifications to endure. During the long period of peace which Prussia had experienced since the treaty of Bâle, in the midst of wars and disasters all around her, Frederick-William had enjoyed ample opportunities for cultivating his natural taste for the fine arts; and already a gallery of paintings was, when the campaign opened, far

8.

Wise inter-
nal measures
adopted by
the Prussian
government.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

¹ Hard. ix.
456, 458.
Lucches.
ii. 8, 12.

advanced at Berlin, which promised ere long to rival the far-famed museums of Munich, Dresden, and Paris. But all these gems in his crown were torn away by the ruthless hand of conquest; and his much-loved monuments of genius now adorned the halls of the Louvre, or graced the palace of the French Emperor.¹

9.

First mea-
sures of the
King of
Prussia to
restore the
public for-
tunes.

Driven by necessity to more important pursuits, the first care of the King, upon the termination of hostilities, was to free the public service from those whose temporising and unworthy policy, or treacherous and pusillanimous conduct, had induced the general calamities. Haugwitz remained forgotten and neglected at his country residence; Hardenberg, whose great abilities were loudly called for in the present crisis, and who had been the leading minister since hostilities had been resolved on, was compelled, by the jealousy of Napoleon, not only to leave the government, but to retire from the country; and it was only after the withdrawal of the French armies that he obtained leave to re-enter Prussia, and return to his rural seat of Tempelberg. The Chancellor Goldbeck, and all the inferior ministers, Massow, Reck, d'Auger, Thulmeyer, and their coadjutors, were dismissed, to the great satisfaction of the public; and the generals and inferior officers, who had so disgracefully yielded up the bulwarks of the monarchy after the catastrophe of Jena, were in a body removed from the army. Yet even here the humane and perhaps prudent disposition of the King prevailed over the justly roused feeling of general indignation against such unworthy betrayers of national trusts; and instead of grounding their dismissal on their notorious dereliction of duty, it was in general rested on the destitute state of the public treasury, and the necessity of rigorous economy in every branch of administration. The inquiry, however, under the direction of the princes-royal, was carried through every department and grade of the army;² and, to demonstrate its entire impartiality, the heroic Blucher himself

² Hard. ix.
456, 459.
Lucches. ii.
8, 17.

was subjected to the same test with his less intrepid brethren in arms.

Deprived, by the unworthy jealousy of Napoleon, of the assistance of Hardenberg's counsels, the King of Prussia had still the courage, in the almost desperate state of his fortunes, to have recourse to a statesman who, like him, had been distinguished in an especial manner by the hatred of the Emperor. It is to the great abilities, enlightened patriotism, and enduring constancy of the BARON STEIN,* that Prussia is indebted for the measures which prepared the way for the resurrection of the monarchy. This eminent man, born in 1757, had entered the public service in the administration of the state mines, under the Great Frederick, in 1780; but his admirable talents for business soon raised him to the ministry of trade and finance in 1804, which he held till the breaking out of the Polish war in 1806, when he withdrew to his estates, and remained in retirement till again called to the public service in the beginning of October 1807. During his active employment, he acquired, by the accuracy and fidelity of his administration, the esteem both of his sovereign and his fellow-citizens; and, during his subsequent retirement, he had ample opportunities for meditating on the causes which had brought such calamities on his country. So clearly were his ideas formed, and so decided his conviction as to the only means which remained of reinstating the public affairs,¹ that he com-

CHAP
LI.

1807.

10.

Accession of
Baron Stein
to the minis-
try. His
firm cha-
racter, and
admirable
measures.

Oct. 5.

¹ Hard. ix.
460, 461.

* Baron Stein was born at Nassau, in October 1757, of an old noble family which held immediately of the Germanic empire. He received the rudiments of his education at Göttingen, and afterwards studied public law at Wehtzar, the seat of the Imperial Chamber. In 1780, at the age of twenty-three, he first entered the civil service of Prussia, to which he had been early destined by his father, as director of the mines at Wettin in Westphalia; and in 1784 was appointed ambassador at Aschaffenburg. His great abilities having become known in these situations, he was, in 1786, appointed to the important situation of president of all the Westphalian chambers, in which office he laboured assiduously and successfully till 1804. In that year he was, on the death of Struensee, minister of finance and trade, promoted to that elevated situation, in which capacity he remained till 1806, when, on account of some differences with the King of Prussia as to the course to be pursued in the critical circumstances of the monarchy, he resigned his office and retired to his estates at

CHAP. LI.

 1807.
 Oct. 9. menced at once a vigorous but yet cautious system of amelioration ; and, only four days after his appointment as Minister of the Interior, a royal decree appeared, which introduced a salutary reform into the constitution.

11.
 Admirable reforms which he introduced in Prussia.
 Oct. 9. By this ordinance the peasants and burghers obtained the right, hitherto confined to the nobles, of acquiring and holding landed property ; while they in their turn were permitted, without losing caste, to engage in the pursuits of commerce and industry. Landholders were allowed, under reservation of the rights of their creditors, to separate their estates into distinct parcels, and alienate them to different persons. Every species of slavery, whether contracted by birth, marriage, or agreement, was prohibited subsequent to the 11th November 1810 ; and every servitude, *corvée*, or obligation of service or rent, other than those founded on the rights of property or express agreement, was for ever abolished. By a second ordinance, published six weeks afterwards, certain important franchises were conferred on municipalities. By this wise decree, which is in many respects the Magna Charta of the Prussian burghs, it was provided that the burghers should enjoy councillors of their own election, for regulating all local and municipal concerns : that a third of the number should go out by rotation, and be renewed by an election every year ; that the council thus chosen should assemble twice a-year to deliberate on the public affairs ; that two burgomasters should be at the head of

Nov. 19.

Nassau. The King, however, was so well aware of his abilities, that he recalled him soon after the peace of Tilsit ; and it was then that he planned and executed those great yet cautious social reforms which laid the foundation of the resurrection of the monarchy. Ere long, however, his patriotic spirit and great abilities excited the jealousy of Napoleon, who made the King of Prussia send him into exile. He retired to Prague, where he remained, associating much with Arndt, the banished Elector of Hesse-Cassel, and other vehement enemies of Napoleon, till May 1812, when, on the approach of the French Emperor to Dresden on the eve of the Moscow campaign, he went to St Petersburg, where his firmness and energy were of great service in supporting the Emperor Alexander through that dreadful crisis.—See *Biog. des Hommes Vivants*, v. 415 ; *Lebensbilder aus dem Befreiungs Kriege*, ii. 487 ; and VON GAGERN's *Antheil an der Politik*, iv. 387, 396.

the magistracy, one of whom should be chosen by the King from a list of three presented, and the other by the councillors : and that the police of the burgh should be administered by a syndic appointed for twelve years, and who should also have a seat in the municipal council. The administration of the *Haute Police*, or that connected with the state, was reserved to government. By a third ordinance, an equally important alteration was made in favour of the numerous class of debtors, whom the public calamities had disabled from performing their engagements, by prohibiting all demand for the capital sums till the 24th June 1810 ; providing at the same time for the punctual payment of the interest, under pain of losing the benefit of the ordinance. Thus at the very moment that France, during the excitement consequent on the triumphs of Jena and Friedland, was losing the last remnant of the free institutions which had been called into existence during the fervour and crimes of the Revolution ; Prussia, amidst the humiliation of unprecedented disasters, and when groaning under the weight of foreign chains, was silently relaxing the fetters of the feudal system, and laying the foundation, in a cautious and guiltless reformation of experienced grievances, for the future erection of those really free institutions which can never be established on any other bases than those of justice, order, and religion.¹

In the prosecution, however, of these glorious, because wise and judicious, plans of public improvement, Stein had great difficulties to encounter. Government was overwhelmed by a multitude of civil servants, to the number of seven thousand, who had been deprived of their situations in the ceded provinces, and whose just prayers for relief could not be attended to by a treasury drained of the last farthing by the charges of the war, and the inordinate requisitions of the French armies. The rapid absorption of the precious metals by these rigorous taskmasters, the general practice of hoarding which their depre-

CHAP.
LI.
1807.

Nov. 24.

¹ Hard. ix.
460, 463.
Lucches. ii.
17, 18.

12.
Various
causes of
distress in
Prussia.
Stein is
exiled.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

dations occasioned, and the necessity in consequence of having recourse to a currency of a baser alloy, or paper money, to supply the deficiency, had totally deranged the monetary system, and occasioned a rapid enhancement of prices, under which the labouring classes suffered severely. The closing of the harbours against foreign commerce, in consequence of the Berlin and Milan decrees, put the finishing stroke to the public distress, and raised such a ferment, that the King was obliged to yield to the general clamour and the representations of the French authorities, who dreaded the effects of such an intrepid system of government, and sent Stein into honourable exile in Bohemia. So rapidly was this insisted on by the ministers of Napoleon, that the last of these regenerating measures, dated 24th November 1807, was signed by his successors, M. Dohna and Altenstein. But by this ebullition of jealousy the French Emperor gained nothing. The merit of Stein was too generally known by the intelligent classes to be forgotten; from his retreat he really directed the Prussian councils; and by the appointment of SCHARNHORST to the elevated office of minister of war, the door was opened to a variety of important changes in that department, which proved of the highest consequence six years afterwards in the mortal struggle for European freedom.¹

¹ Hard. ix.
464, 466.

13.
History,
character,
and great
reforms of
Scharn-
horst.

Gerard David de Scharnhorst, who was now intrusted with the military direction of Prussia, and whose great scientific abilities subsequently rendered him so distinguished in the annals of European glory, had quitted the Hanoverian service for that of Prussia in 1801. Taken prisoner at Lübeck, but subsequently exchanged, he had powerfully contributed, by his decisive conduct at the critical moment with Lestocq's corps, to the result of the battle of Eylau. In him a blameless life and amiable manners were combined with the purest patriotism and the soundest judgment: exalted attainments were undisfigured by pride; vigour of thought was adorned by sim-

plicity of character. The perfection of the French military organisation, as well as the energy of their army, appeared to him in painful contrast beside the numerous defects and dejected spirit of that over which he now presided. But instead of sinking in despair under the difficulties of his situation, he was only inspired, by the magnitude of the evil, with additional ardour in the work of amelioration, and induced, like Stein, to take advantage of the general consternation to effect several salutary reforms, which, in more tranquil times, might have been seriously obstructed by the prejudices of aristocratic birth or the suggestions of interested ambition. Boldly applying to the military department the admirable principles by which Stein had secured the affections of the burgher classes, he threw open to the whole citizens the higher grades of the army, from which they had hitherto been excluded, abolished the degrading corporal punishments by which the spirit of the soldier had been withered, and removed those invidious distinctions which, by exempting some classes from the burden of personal service, made its weight fall with additional severity on those who were not relieved.¹

Every department of the service underwent his searching scrutiny. In all he introduced salutary reforms, rectified experienced abuses, and electrified the general spirit, by opening to merit the career of promotion; while the general strength of the army was silently augmented to an extent which afterwards became in the highest degree important, by the introduction of an equally simple and efficacious regulation. By the subsisting engagements with Napoleon, it had been provided that Prussia should not keep on foot more than forty-two thousand men—a stipulation which at once cast her down to the rank of a fourth-rate power, and totally disabled her from assuming the attitude of resistance to the numerous and hourly increasing demands of the French armies. To elude its operation, and at the same time avoid any direct or obvi-

CHAP.
LI.
1807.

Dec. 15,
1807, and
Jan. 7, 1808.
¹ Hard. ix.
467.

14.
His great
reforms and
admirable
system in
the army.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

ous infringement of the treaty, he took care never to have more than the stipulated number of men at once in arms, but no sooner were the young soldiers sufficiently drilled than they were sent home to their hearths, and other recruits called to the national standards, who, in like manner, after a brief period of service, made way for others in succession. By this simple but admirable system, which is the true secret of the political strength and military renown of Prussia, so much beyond the physical resources of the monarchy, a military spirit was diffused through the whole population ; service in the army came to be considered, instead of a degradation, as an agreeable recreation after the severe labours of pacific life ; the manner, carriage, and intelligence of those who returned from their standards were so superior to those of the rustics who had remained at home, that no Prussian damsel would look at a youth who had not served in the ranks ; the passion for arms became universal ; and while forty thousand only were enrolled in the regular army, two hundred thousand brave men were ere long trained to arms, and ready at a moment's warning to join the standards of their country.¹*

¹ Hard. ix.
467, 468.

15.
Rise and
progress of
the Tugend-
bund and
secret socie-
ties.

From these salutary changes, joined to the oppressive exactions of the French armies, and the enormous contributions levied by the government through the whole of the north of Germany, arose another effect, not less important in its ultimate consequences upon the future fate of Europe. Grievously oppressed by foreign depredation ; deprived by national disaster of domestic protection ; surrounded within and without by insatiable enemies or impotent friends ; cut off from their commerce,

* It is a most singular circumstance that this admirable military system, which beyond all question proved the salvation of Prussia both in the Seven Years' War and that of Independence in the year 1813, was derived by them from their German ancestors in the time of Cæsar. "*Suevorum gens est longe maxima et bellicosissima Germanorum omnium. Hi centum pagos habere dicuntur, ex quibus quotannis singula millia armatorum, bellandi causâ, ex finibus educunt ; reliqui, qui domi manserint, se atque alios alunt. Hi rursus invicem anno post in armis sunt, illi domi remanent. Sic neque agricultura,*

their manufactures, the vent for their industry,—with their farm produce liable to perpetual seizure by bands of rapacious men armed with imperial authority,—the inhabitants both of the towns and the country had no resource but in mutual and voluntary associations. The universality of the suffering produced a corresponding unanimity of opinion ; the divisions which existed before the war disappeared under the calamities to which it had given birth ; the jealousies of rank or class yielded to the pressure of common distress. Genius and learning, amidst the general despondency, stood forth as the leaders, privately and cautiously indeed, but still the leaders, of public thought. Societies were everywhere formed, in profound secrecy, for the future deliverance of Germany ; the professors at the universities were at their head ; the ardent youth who attended these seminaries joyfully enrolled themselves in their ranks ; the nobles and statesmen at the helm of affairs lent them what, with such materials, was much required, the aid of their wisdom and the benefits of their experience. Stein was their leader : from his retreat in Bohemia, and subsequently in Russia, he exercised a secret but unlimited sway over the minds of all the energetic and generous portion of the north of Germany. Arndt, who was soon after compelled to seek an asylum from French persecution in the latter empire, lent the cause all the aid of his nervous eloquence ; Professor Jahn supported it with powerful zeal ; Hardenberg was active in its behalf ; Scharnhorst, and almost all the councillors of the King, though compelled publicly to discountenance its proceedings, were, in reality, either secret members of the TUGENDBUND,* or warmly disposed to second its efforts.¹

nec ratio atque usus belli intermittitur : neque multum frumento, sed maximam partem lacte atque pecore vivunt.”—CÆSAR, *de Bello Gallico*.

It would seem that nations never change either as regards the spirit of their institutions or their national character : if we would discover the remote causes of either, we must seek for them in their cradle, as we must for the germ of the full-grown oak in the acorn.

* Society or League of Virtue.

¹ Hard. ix.
467, 469.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

16.
Generals
and officers
who secretly
joined the
Tugend-
bund.

There, too, were to be seen those exalted spirits who subsequently, through evil report and good report, in prosperity and adversity, stood foremost in support of European freedom: Schill, whose ardent patriotism, in advance of his countrymen, precipitated in 1809, to his own ruin, that premature resistance which four years longer of ignominy and bondage were required to render universal; Wittgenstein, the future antagonist of Napoleon, whose clear judgment, notwithstanding the prudent reserve of his character, saw in these associations the only means of future salvation; Blucher, whose generous and inconsiderate ardour threw him early into their arms, as it afterwards warmed him in the headlong charge against the enemy; Gneisenau, whose scientific abilities, supplying what was wanting in his gallant associate, proved so fatal to the arms of France. The nobles, straitened in their fortunes by the French requisitions, and insulted in their persons by the French officers; the peasants, ground to the dust by merciless exactions, supported by military force; the merchants, ruined by the Continental System, and reduced to despair by the entire stoppage of foreign commerce; the burghers, become the bitterest enemies of Napoleon, from his entire overthrow of those liberal principles on which the early fortunes of the Revolution had been founded—all combined to join the secret societies, from which alone they could one day hope for the deliverance of their country. The machinery put in motion for the attainment of these objects was indeed highly dangerous, and capable of being applied to the worst purposes; but the necessities of their situation gave the lovers of the Fatherland no alternative. Alike in town and country, equally among the rich and the poor, the Tugendbund spread its ramifications. A central body of directors at Berlin guided its movements; provincial committees carried its orders into effect; and, as is usual in such cases, a dark, unseen authority was obeyed with an implicit alacrity unknown to the commands even of

the successor of Charlemagne. Thus, while France, rioting in the triumph of Tilsit, and deeming her power established on an immovable basis, was fawning on her rulers with Eastern adulation, and bartering her freedom for the enjoyment of gold; Prussia, taking counsel from adversity, was preparing in silence, in the amelioration of her institutions and the energy of her inhabitants, that real regeneration which, independent of individuals, unstained by crime, was destined hereafter to raise her from the lowest state of depression to a height of glory surpassing all she had lost.¹

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

¹ Hard. ix.
467, 469,
x. 74, 75.

Bent to the earth by the disasters of Austerlitz, but still possessing the physical and material resources of power, Austria, during the desperate strife from the Saale to the Niemen, was silently but uninterruptedly repairing her losses, and preparing to resume her place in the rank of independent nations. If she had lost the opportunity, during the preceding winter, of interposing with decisive effect on the banks of the Elbe, she had the magnitude of previous disasters, the mortal hazard of an unsuccessful demonstration, to offer in her excuse. Sufficient reliance, it was thought, could not yet be placed on the constancy of Russia; suffering had not adequately tamed the hereditary jealousy of the Prussian government. But the observers of the Imperial cabinet augured, not less from the measures which they were in the course of adopting, than the known perseverance and constancy of their policy, that they had by no means relinquished the contest, and that, if a favourable opportunity should occur, they would yet appear foremost in the struggle for European freedom. During the interval of hostilities, the Aulic Council had been indefatigable in their efforts to restore the equipment and revive the spirit of the army. The artillery, abstracted by Napoleon from the arsenal of Vienna, had been regained, in great part, by purchase from the French government; ² vast exertions had been made to supply the horses

17.
Situation,
statistics,
and power
of Austria.

² Hard. ix.
445, 447.
Report of
Archduke
Charles,
Aug. 10.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

wanting in the cavalry regiments; the infantry had been, to a considerable extent, recruited by the prisoners who returned from France, or new soldiers who had been unostentatiously invited to the Imperial standards.

18.
She joins the
Continental
System, and
obtains the
evacuation
of Braunau.
Aug. 24.

In open violation of the treaty of Pressburg, however, France had hitherto retained the fortress of Braunau, on their western frontier, on the absurd pretext that Russia, an independent power, over whom the Imperial cabinet had no control, had not, agreeably to that treaty, evacuated the mouths of the Cattaro. Other measures, equally significant, told them they were regarded by the great Conqueror only in the highest rank of vassals. Andreossi, the French ambassador at Vienna, openly used the most menacing language, both before and after the treaty of Tilsit; new states were, without either notice or negotiation, added by a simple decree of the French Emperor to the Confederation of the Rhine;* and by a summary decree the cabinet of Vienna was ordered forthwith to adhere to the Continental System.† By yielding on this vital point, however, and at the same

* The principalities of Anhalt, Reuss, Ladepé Schwartzburg, and Waldeck.

Resources
and statistics
of the Aus-
trian empire.

† The resources of Austria in 1807, notwithstanding the loss of the Tyrol and other provinces by the peace of Pressburg, were still very great; and they are an object of interest, considering the prominent share which that power soon after took in the war. They are thus stated by Baron Lichtenstein:—

Population,	.	.	.	.	.	24,900,000
Inhabited towns,	.	.	.	.	.	796
Burghs, .	.	.	.	.	.	2,012
Villages,	.	.	.	.	.	65,572

Population composed of

Germans,	.	.	.	.	.	6,400,000
Slavonians,	.	.	.	.	.	13,000,000
Hungarians,	.	.	.	.	.	3,400,000
Poles, Jews, Bohemians,	.	.	.	.	.	2,100,000
						24,900,000

Divided by religion as follows:—

Catholics,	.	.	.	.	.	19,292,000
Greek Church,	.	.	.	.	.	2,100,000
Zuinglians,	.	.	.	.	.	2,000,000
Protestants,	.	.	.	.	.	1,000,000
Jews,	.	.	.	.	.	508,000

24,900,000

time making a skilful use of the termination of the dispute with Russia about the mouths of the Cattaro, in virtue of the treaty of Tilsit, as well as the growing anxiety of the French Emperor to increase his forces on the Pyrenean frontier, with a view to his ambitious projects in the Spanish peninsula, Metternich, to the great joy of the inhabitants of Vienna, who regarded its prolonged occupation as a continued badge of subjection, at length succeeded in obtaining the removal of the French troops from Braunau ; and the Imperial dominions, still flourishing and powerful, notwithstanding all their losses, ceased to be polluted by the presence of a stranger.¹

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

Oct. 10.

¹ Hard. ix.
445, 447.

In the general wreck of the hopes of Europe on the shores of the Niemen, the King of Sweden, who possessed a spirit worthy of a more powerful monarchy and a greater part on the political stage, was not discouraged. His semi-insular situation enabled him to bid defiance to the threats of the French Emperor ; the passage round the Gulf of Bothnia was scarcely practicable ; and with the assistance of England, he did not despair of being able to make head against his enemies, even if Russia should be added to their already formidable league. No

19.
Affairs of
Sweden.
The Swedes
are shut up
in Stral-
sund.

	FLORINS.
Revenue,	110,000,000
Public Debt,	900,000,000
Civil List and Court annual charges,	11,000,000
Army,	40,000,000
Interest and charges of debt,	47,000,000
<i>Army.</i>	NUMBER.
Infantry,	271,800
Cavalry,	50,000
Artillery,	14,300
Guards,	3,000
	<hr/> 339,100

Besides the Hungarian Insurrection, or levy *en masse*.

	FLORINS.
Annual produce of agriculture,	760,000,000
minerals,	47,000,000
Number of oxen,	3,000,000
horses,	1,500,000

—LICHTENSTEIN'S *Statist. de la Monarchie Autrichienne*: and HARD. ix. *Pièces Just. K.*

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

July 3.

July 13.

July 15.
1 Dum. xix.
138, 145.
Jom. ii.
456, 457.

20.
Siege of
Stralsund.

sooner, therefore, did the English squadron, with the advanced guard of the land forces, which had been destined for the support of Russia and Prussia, appear in the Baltic, than he denounced the armistice, just nineteen days after the battle of Friedland. Napoleon, noways displeased at this unexpected resumption of hostilities, immediately made preparations for bringing them to a rapid conclusion. Thirty thousand men were speedily assembled under Marshal Brune, who, as soon as hostilities recommenced on the 13th July, began to press on all sides the fifteen thousand Swedes who occupied Pomerania. Unable to bear up against so great a preponderance of force, the Swedish generals, after some inconsiderable combats, took shelter under the cannon of Stralsund; and Brune completed the investment of that place in the middle of July.¹

The King of Sweden was soon made to perceive, from bitter experience, that after the pacification of Tilsit, his transmarine dominions were held by the most precarious tenure. At first the English troops, under Lord Cathcart, above ten thousand strong, and in the finest condition, formed part of the garrison; and the presence of this imposing force appeared to promise to Gustavus, who commanded in person, the means of making a defence which might rival that by which Charles XII. had immortalised its walls. At this period the Swedish monarch appeared to be passionately desirous of military renown; and so ambitious was he of the perils and glories of actual warfare, that he went so far as to send a flag of truce to the French marshal, offering a purse of gold to the gunner in the French lines who had levelled the piece of ordnance, the shot of which had struck the wall a few feet from the place where he was standing*—a proceeding which the English general justly considered as savouring

* I received this anecdote from my venerable and much esteemed friend the Earl of Cathcart, now no more; whose recollection of all the events of that memorable period, in which he bore so prominent a part, was as vivid and correct, to a very advanced age, as when they occurred thirty years before.

rather of a romantic or highly excited temperament, than the sober judgment befitting the ruler of a nation. But stern necessity soon put a period to these chivalrous illusions. The English troops were withdrawn in the end of July, to co-operate in the great armament intended for the reduction of Copenhagen and seizure of the Danish fleet, of which mention will immediately be made; and the Swedish garrison, without any external aid, was left to make head alone against the hourly increasing forces of the French marshal, which already were more than double their own.¹

CHAP.
LI.
1807.

July 30.

¹ Dum. xix.
153, 155.
Jom. ii.
456.

The evident hopelessness of the attempt to preserve the place after the treaty of Tilsit was known, and it had become apparent that the French Emperor could increase the besieging force at pleasure to quadruple its present amount, damped the military ardour of the Swedes, and induced them to prolong the defence rather from a sense of duty than from any hope that it could ultimately prove successful. Trenches were begun on the night of the fête of the Emperor, by seven thousand workmen, and advanced, under the scientific direction of General Chasseloup, with extraordinary vigour. Contrary to all previous example, the approaches were made on three fronts at the same time, and pushed with such rapidity, that in four days they were within three hundred yards of the external pallisades, the batteries already armed, and everything prepared for a bombardment. Seeing their city about to be ruined for no political or national purpose, but a mere point of military honour, the magistrates threw themselves at the feet of the King, and besought him to spare the inhabitants the horrors of an unavailing defence. He could not resist the appeal, and withdrew with almost the whole garrison into the adjacent island of Rugen; while Stralsund itself, with four hundred pieces of cannon and immense military magazines, fell into the hands of the enemy.²

^{21.}
Its fall.

Aug. 15.

Aug. 20.

² Dum. xix.
145, 161.
Jom. ii.
456, 457.

The Swedes, however, still kept their ground in the

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

22.

Capture of
the islands
of Danholm
and Rugen.

Aug. 25.

Sept. 7.

¹ Jom. ii.
456, 457.
Dum. xix.
161, 165.

23.

Reasons
which led to
the Copen-
hagen expe-
dition.

isles of Rugen and Danholm, which not only completely blockaded the harbour, but neutralised all the advantages otherwise consequent on the possession of this extensive fortress. Marshal Brune showed great activity in the measures adopted to root them out of this their last stronghold on the German shore. Three days after the capitulation, two hundred boats and small craft were assembled, chiefly by means of land carriage, in the harbour of Stralsund, with which, on the night of the 25th, a descent was effected on the isle of Danholm, which fell into the hands of the French, with twenty pieces of cannon, and its little garrison of a hundred and eighty men. Still the isle of Rugen, with the bulk of the Swedish forces, remained in the possession of the King ; but the troops, wearied of a fruitless contest which they deemed foreign to the real interests of the monarchy, and strongly impressed with the idea that the military excitement of their sovereign bordered on insanity, murmured so loudly against the further continuance of the contest that he was obliged to yield. A convention was concluded on the 7th September, by which the island was to be given up to the French troops, and the King, with the whole garrison and fleet, was to withdraw to the Swedish shore. This capitulation relieved Napoleon from all anxiety in the north of Germany, and put the finishing stroke to the Continental war in that part of the world ; but it was far from answering the expectations of the French Emperor, who had calculated on the capture of the Swedish king, or at least the whole of his garrison ; and it was the occasion of Marshal Brune falling into a disgrace from which he never afterwards was able to recover.¹

While the last flames of the Continental war were thus expiring around the walls of Stralsund, a blow of the highest importance to the future prospects of the maritime contest was struck by the vigour and decision of the British cabinet. Notwithstanding all the precautions

taken by the two Emperors, in their negotiations at Tilsit, to bury their designs in profound secrecy, the English government were possessed of a golden key which laid open their most confidential communications. They were made aware of the determination of the imperial despots to seize the fleets of Denmark and Portugal, not only before the design was reduced to a regular treaty, but almost as soon as it was formed; and the vast forces at the disposal of the French Emperor left no room for doubt that he possessed ample means to carry his intentions into effect. Not a moment was to be lost; for in the final treaty, as already noticed,¹ the 1st November was fixed as the period when the courts of Copenhagen and Lisbon were to be summoned to place their fleets at the disposal of the combined powers, and enter into the general confederacy against Great Britain. Hardly was the ink of the treaty dry, when Napoleon directed Talleyrand to write to the Danish government that the time had now arrived when they must take a decided part; that the cause of France was their own, and that of all neutral powers—especially the least powerful, hitherto so cruelly tyrannised over by the British power: and he made offer of a powerful French force, and a numerous train of artillery, to enable them to make head against the English fleet. At the same time the French forces, under Bernadotte and Davoust, began to defile in such numbers towards Holstein, and assumed so menacing a position, that it was evident that Denmark would speedily lose her whole continental possessions, if she resisted the demands of the combined Emperors. Nor did there appear any reason to believe that the cabinet of Copenhagen would incur any such hazard to maintain their neutrality. On the contrary, there were the strongest grounds for concluding that they would readily embrace so favourable an opportunity of contending, with the aid of such powerful allies, for those maritime changes which had long constituted the ruling objects of their ambition.²

CHAP.
LI.
1807.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
xlvi. § 79.

² Ann. Reg.
1807, 249.
Parl. Deb.
x. 402.
Thiers, viii.
16.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

24.

Uniform
hostility of
Denmark
to Great
Britain.

In 1780, they had been the first to join the Northern Confederacy against England and proclaim the principles of the armed neutrality; in 1801, they had exposed themselves for the same object, in the front rank, to the cannon of Nelson and all the terrors of the English navy. More lately, their conduct had savoured still more strongly of aversion to the English and partiality for the French alliance. The Berlin decree of 21st November, which inflicted so unexampled and fatal a wound on neutral commerce, had drawn forth no complaints from the Danish government; but no sooner was the British Order in Council of 7th January issued, which provided only a mild, and, as it proved, ineffectual measure of retaliation, by putting a stop to the coasting trade of neutrals from one French harbour to another, than the Danish minister made loud complaints, which drew forth the able and unanswerable reply from Lord Howick, which has already been quoted.¹ No remonstrances had been made by the Danish government against the threatening accumulation of forces on the frontier of Holstein; no advances to secure aid, in the peril which was evidently approaching, from the British or Swedish cabinets. On the contrary, although Napoleon had, previous to the battle of Friedland, made proposals to Gustavus, with a view to detach him from the Russian alliance, and actually offered, as an inducement, to wrest the kingdom of Norway from the Danish crown, and annex it to that of Sweden, yet even the generous refusal of this offer by that upright monarch, accompanied by its instant communication to the cabinet of Copenhagen, had made no alteration in their line of policy, and they declined all offers of assistance against a power which had manifested so little scruple at entertaining the project of partitioning their dominions.²

¹ March 17, 1807. *Ante*, c. 50, § 19, and Parl. Deb. x. 402.

² Ann. Reg. 1807, 249, 255. Parl. Deb. x. 402, 407. *Jom.* ii. 450, 451.

25.
Resolution of the British cabinet.

In these circumstances the cabinet of Great Britain had a most serious duty to perform. They were menaced with an attack from the combined navies of Europe, amounting to one hundred and eighty sail of the line;

and of that immense force they were well aware that the Baltic fleet would form the right wing.* No time was to be lost; every hour was precious: in a few days an overwhelming French force would, to all appearance, be assembled on the shores of the Great Belt; and, if ferried over to Zealand, might enable the Danish government securely to comply with the requisition of the combined Emperors, and bid defiance to all the efforts of Great Britain. In these circumstances they took a resolution similar to that adopted by Frederick the Great in regard to Saxony, when he received authentic intelligence of the accession or probable accession of Saxony to the league of Russia and Austria against his existence; and resolved, by a vigorous stroke, not only to deprive the enemy of the prize he was so soon to seize, but to convert its resources to their own defence.¹

CHAP.

LI.

1807.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 255,
257. Jom.
ii. 450, 451.

Accidental circumstances gave the British government, contrary to the usual case with an insular power, the means both with respect to land and sea forces of instantly acting on this vigorous resolution. The first division of the expedition which had been so long in preparation to aid the Allies on the shores of the Baltic was already in the isle of Rugen, and the remainder was in such a state of forwardness as to be ready to embark at a few days' notice. A large naval force was also assembled, to act as occasion might require, and this was speedily added to with extraordinary expedition. Such was the activity

26.

Equipment
and departure
of the
expedition.

* General Jomini has given the following summary of the design of Napoleon and Alexander after the treaty of Tilsit to unite all the navies of Europe against England, and of the probable forces at their disposal. Speaking in the person of the French Emperor, he says, "After Russia had joined my alliance, Prussia, as a matter of course, followed her example; Portugal, Sweden, and the Pope alone required to be gained over, for we were well aware that Denmark would hasten to throw herself into our arms. If England refused the proffered mediation of Russia, the whole maritime forces of the Continent were to be employed against her, and they could muster 180 sail of the line. In a few years this force could be raised to 250. With the aid of such a fleet, and my immense flotilla, it was by no means impossible to lead a European army to London. One hundred ships of the line employed against her colonies in the two hemispheres, would have sufficed to draw off a large portion of the British navy; while eighty more,

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

Aug. 3.
Aug. 4.
1 Ann. Reg.
1807, 257.
Lord Cath-
cart's Des-
patch, 14th
Aug. 1807.
Ibid. 681,
682.

displayed by the new ministers, that in the end of July twenty-seven ships of the line, having on board twenty thousand land troops, set sail from the British harbours, besides other smaller vessels, amounting in all to ninety pendants, and stretched across the German Ocean for the shores of Denmark. Had this great expedition been prepared, as it might have been, two months earlier, by the preceding administration, it would, to all appearance, have averted the disaster of Friedland, determined the hesitation of Austria, and driven Napoleon to a disastrous retreat, for which he was already making preparations, to the Rhine. As matters now stood, it had a subordinate but still a very important duty to perform. They arrived off the Danish coast on the 3d August, and immediately stationed such a force under Commodore Keats, in the Great Belt, as effectually cut off all communication between the island of Zealand and the adjacent isles, or shores of Jutland. At the same time the troops from Stralsund, ten thousand strong, arrived, under Lord Cathcart, who immediately took the command of the whole expedition; and the formidable armament, spreading their sails before a favourable wind, passed the Sound, and cast anchor in appalling strength before the harbour of Copenhagen.¹

It was no part, however, of the design of the British government to precipitate the country into hostilities; on the contrary, they were on many accounts most desi-

assembled in the Channel, would have sufficed to assure the passage of the flotilla and avenge the outraged rights of nations. Such was at bottom my plan, which only failed of success from the faults committed in the Spanish war."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoléon*, ii. 449.

<i>Vessels.</i> —French ships of the line,				60
Spanish	do.	.	.	40
Russian	do.	.	.	25
Swedish	do.	.	.	15
Danish	do.	.	.	15
Dutch	do.	.	.	15
Portuguese	do.	.	.	10
Total,				180

rous to avoid, if possible, proceeding to that extremity, and rather to gain the object in view by diplomatic arrangements than actual force. With this view they had sent Mr Jackson with the armament, who had resided as envoy of Great Britain for many years at the court of Berlin, and was supposed to enjoy, in a very high degree, the confidence of the northern powers. As soon as he arrived off the Danish coast, Mr Jackson landed at Kiel, and proceeded to announce the purport of his instructions to Count Bernstorff, and request an audience of the Prince-Royal. By the former he was received with the indignant vehemence natural to a patriotic minister, who saw, from what he conceived to be foreign injustice, a grievous misfortune impending over his country ; by the latter, with the mild but courageous dignity which added lustre to a throne exposed to the storms of adversity. The instructions of the English envoy, however, were peremptory ; and as the Prince-Royal positively refused to accede to the terms proposed, which were, that the fleet should be deposited with the British government in pledge, and under an obligation of restitution, till the conclusion of a general peace, he had no alternative but to declare that force would be employed. Upon this, the Prince-Royal, with praiseworthy resolution, declared his determination to share the dangers of his capital, and immediately set out for Copenhagen. He was allowed by the British cruisers to pass the Great Belt with all the officers of his staff, and was soon after followed to the capital by the British envoy ; but having no powers to accede to an accommodation on the basis proposed, the negotiation broke off, and both sides prepared to decide the matter in dispute by the sword. At the same time, a proclamation was issued by the English commanders, declaring in precise terms the object of their hostility, disclaiming all idea of conquest or capture, but demanding the fleet in deposit till the conclusion of a general peace.¹*

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

27.
Ineffectual
negotiation
with Den-
mark.

Aug. 16.
¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 222, 223.
Ann. Reg.
258, 261.
Dum. xix.
167, 173.

* "Whereas the present treaties of peace, and the changes of government

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

28.

Siege of Copenhagen.
Action of
Sir Arthur
Wellesley.

The British troops commenced their disembarkation without resistance on the 16th; and in three days the whole force was landed, and the investment of the town completed. It then appeared that, however much the Danish government might have been inclined to accede to the summons of the combined Emperors, and unite their navy to the general maritime confederacy, they had at least no expectation of being so soon involved in hostilities on their own shores, and were totally unprepared for the formidable forces now arrayed by sea and land against them. Such had been the vigilance of the cruisers in the Great Belt, that no troops whatever had been ferried over from the adjacent shores; and no preparations had, on their arrival, been made in Zealand itself. The ramparts were unarmed, the fleet unequipped; and though great fermentation and the most honourable patriotic zeal prevailed in the capital, few regular troops were assembled within its walls, and little progress could in so short a time be made in the organisation of a volun-

Proclamation
of Lord Cath-
cart on land-
ing in Zea-
land.

and of territory acceded to, and by so many powers, have so far increased the influence of France on the Continent of Europe as to render it impossible for Denmark, even though it desires to be neutral, to preserve its neutrality, and absolutely necessary for those who continue to resist the French aggression to take measures to prevent the arms of a neutral power from being turned against them; in this view, his Majesty cannot regard the present position of Denmark with indifference, and he has therefore sent negotiators with ample powers to his Danish Majesty, to request, in the most amicable manner, such explanations as the circumstances require, and a concurrence in such measures as can alone give security against the further mischief which the French meditate through the acquisition of the Danish navy. The King, therefore, has judged it expedient to demand the temporary deposit of the Danish ships of the line in one of his Majesty's ports. The deposit seems to be just, and so indispensably necessary, under the relative situation of the neutral and belligerent powers, that his Majesty has further deemed it a duty to himself and to his people to support his demand by a powerful fleet, and by an army amply supplied with every necessary for the most active and determined enterprise. We come, therefore, to your shores, inhabitants of Zealand, not as enemies, but in self-defence, to prevent those who have so long disturbed the peace of Europe from compelling the force of your navy to be employed against us. *We ask deposit—we have not looked to capture:* So far from it, the most solemn pledge has been offered to your government, and it is hereby renewed, in the name and by the express commands of the King our master, that if our demand is acceded to, *every ship belonging to the Danish navy shall, at the conclusion of a general peace, be restored to her*, in the same condition and state of equipment as when received

teer force. The sudden calm, however, which ensued, and prevented the ships from approaching the coast to land the heavy ordnance and siege equipage, retarded for several days the approaches, and afforded the Danes a breathing-time, of which they actively availed themselves, both to prepare for their defence and retard the operations of the besiegers. But this respite was of short duration, and by inspiring the inhabitants with fallacious hopes, in the end it only led to additional and lamentable calamities. The heavy artillery was at length landed, and brought up to the trenches; the assistance of the sailors enabled the works to be prosecuted with great rapidity; and on the 1st September they were so far advanced as to have everything in readiness for the bombardment to commence. The place was then summoned, and the same terms generously offered which had before been rejected.* Meanwhile SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY, who then began in high command that career in Europe which has rendered his name and country immortal,¹ moved with ten thousand men against a body of

CHAP.
LI.
1807.

Aug. 19
and 21.

¹ Sir A. Wellesley's Despatch. Ann. Reg. 1807, 703. Dum. xix. 171, 176.

under the protection of the British flag. It is in the power of your government, by a word, to sheath our swords, most reluctantly drawn against you; you will be treated on the footing of the most friendly powers; property of all sorts will be respected and preserved; the most severe discipline enforced; every article required paid for at a fair price: but if these offers are rejected, and the machinations of France render you deaf to the voice of reason and the call of friendship, the innocent blood that will be shed, and the horrors of a besieged and bombarded capital, must fall on your own heads, and those of your cruel advisers."—See *Parl. Deb.* x. 224. The Prince-Royal replied, "No example is to be found in history of so odious an aggression as that with which Denmark is menaced; more honour may now be expected from the pirates of Barbary than the English government. You offer us your alliance! Do we not know what it is worth?—your allies, vainly expecting your succours for an entire year, have taught us what is the worth of English friendship."—See DUMAS, xix. 171.

Answer of the
Prince-Royal
of Denmark.

* The summons set forth:—"To convince the Danish government and the whole world of the reluctance with which his Majesty has recourse to arms, we the undersigned, at the moment when our troops are before your gates, and our batteries ready to open, renew to you the offer of the same advantageous terms, which we formerly proposed—viz. if you will consent to deliver up the Danish fleet, and to our carrying it away, it shall be held in deposit merely, and restored in as good a state as received, with all its equipments, as soon as the provisions of a general peace shall have removed the necessity which occasioned this demand. But if this offer is now rejected it cannot be repeated.—CATHCART, GAMBIER." *Sept.* 1, 1807.

CHAP.
II.

1807.

twelve thousand militia, supported by a few regular troops, which had assembled in the interior of the island at Kioje, and by a sudden attack, in which the 92d and 52d regiments distinguished themselves, dispersed them with the loss of several hundred killed and twelve hundred prisoners.

29.
Bombard-
ment of
Copenha-
gen.
Sept. 2.

The offer of accommodation being rejected, the bombardment began, and was continued with uncommon vigour, and with only a short interruption, for three days and nights. The inhabitants sustained with heroic resolution the flaming tempest, and all classes were indefatigable in their endeavours to carry water to the quarters where the city had taken fire. But in spite of all their efforts the conflagration spread with frightful rapidity; and at length a great magazine of wood and the lofty steeple of the church of Our Lady took fire, and the flames, curling to a prodigious height up its wooden pinnacles, illuminated the whole heavens, and threw a lurid light over all the fleet and army of the besiegers.* With speechless anxiety the trembling citizens watched the path of the burning projectiles through the air; while the British soldiers and sailors from afar beheld with admiration the heavens tracked by innumerable stars, which seemed to realise more than the fabled splendours of oriental fireworks. Before the third night eighteen hundred houses were consumed; whole streets were level with the ground; and fifteen hundred of the inhabitants had lost their lives. At length the obvious danger of the total destruction of the city by the progress of the flames overcame the firmness of General Peymann, to whom the Prince-Royal had delegated his command:¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 263.
Lord Cath-
cart's Des-
patch, *ibid.*
706, 707.
Dum. xix.
175, 181.
Jom. ii.
454, 455.

* " Chi può dir come serpa e come cresca
Già da più lati il foco? e come folto
Turbi il fumo alle stelle il puro volto?
Vedi globi di fiamme oscure e miste
Fra le rote del fumo in ciel girarsi.
Il vento soffia, e vigor fa ch' acquiste
L'incendio, e in un raccolga i fochi sparsi."

TASSO, *Gerus. Liber. xii.* 45-46.

and on the forenoon of the 5th, a flag of truce appeared at the British outposts to treat for a capitulation.*

But the period of equal negotiation was past: the Danes had perilled all on the issue of the sword; and no other terms would be agreed to but the unconditional surrender of the whole fleet, with all the artillery and naval stores which the place contained. Hard as these terms appeared, necessity left the Danes no alternative, and a capitulation was signed on these conditions two days afterwards, in virtue of which the British troops were immediately put in possession of the citadel, gates, and arsenal; and, by the united efforts of friends and foes, a stop was at length put to the progress of the conflagration, but not before it had consumed an eighth part of the city. By the terms of the capitulation, it had been stipulated that the English should evacuate the citadel of Copenhagen within six weeks, or a shorter time, if the fleet could be got ready before the expiry of that period. But such was the expedition with which the operations were conducted, and the activity displayed by both the naval and military departments, that long before the expiry of that period the fleet was equipped, the stores on board, and the evacuation completed. Early in October, the British fleet and army returned to England, bringing with them their magnificent prize, consisting of eighteen ships of the line in excellent condition, fifteen frigates, six brigs,^{1†} and twenty-five gun-

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

30.

Surrender
of the fleet,
which is
equipped
and brought
to England.

¹ Lord Gambier's Despatch, Ann. Reg. 1807, 698, 699. Dum. xix. 179, 180.

* "From the top of a tower," says a respectable eyewitness, "I beheld, in October 1807, the extent of the devastation. Whole streets were level with the ground; 1800 houses were destroyed; the principal church was in ruins; almost every house in the town bore some marks of violence; 1500 of the inhabitants had lost their lives, and a vast number were wounded. The Danes certainly defended themselves like men, and left to the English the poignant regret that the insatiable ambition of Buonaparte had converted this gallant people into our enemies."—BRENTON'S *Naval History*, ii. 177.

† Including the cannon placed on the praams and floating batteries which were brought away, the artillery taken amounted to 3500 pieces. The prize-money due to the troops engaged was estimated by Admiral Lord Gambier at £960,000.—See HARDENBERG, x. 42.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

31.

Great sensation excited
in Europe
by this expedition.

boats, besides two sail of the line and three frigates which had been destroyed as not worth the removal.

The Copenhagen expedition excited a prodigious sensation throughout Europe ; and as it was a mortal stroke levelled at a neutral power, without any previous declaration of war, or ground for hostility then ascertained, it was generally condemned as an uncalled for and unjustifiable violation of the law of nations. "Blood and fire," said Napoleon, "have made the English masters of Copenhagen;" and these expressions were not only re-echoed over all the Continent by all that great portion of the public press which was directly subjected to his control, but met with a responsive voice in those nations who, chagrined with reason at the refusal of the British government to lend assistance in men or money for the decisive struggle on the banks of the Vistula, were not sorry of this opportunity of giving vent, apparently on very sufficient grounds, to their displeasure. The Russians were loud in their condemnation of the English administration. The Emperor, with that profound dissimulation which formed so remarkable a feature in his character, affected to be deeply afflicted by the catastrophe, though none knew so well the reality of the secret articles in the treaty of Tilsit which had rendered it necessary. Even their long-established national rivalry with the Danes could scarcely induce the Swedes to receive with satisfaction the intelligence of so serious an invasion of neutral rights. Thus, on all sides and in all countries, a general cry of indignation burst forth against this successful enterprise ; and the old jealousy at the maritime power of England revived with such vehemence, as for a time to extinguish all sense of the more pressing dangers arising from the military power of France.¹

¹ Hard. x. 42, 45. Bign. vi. 422, 423. Parl. Deb. x. 211.

32.

Justification
of it soon
afforded by
Napoleon.

But whatever might be at first the general impression of Europe as to the Copenhagen expedition immediately after it occurred, Napoleon was not long of affording it a complete vindication. It has been already mentioned

that it was stipulated in the treaty of Tilsit that, in the event of England declining the proffered mediation of Russia, the courts of Copenhagen and Lisbon should be summoned to join the Continental League, and unite their naval forces to those of France and Russia.* On the 12th August, a note was transmitted to the French minister at Lisbon, peremptorily requiring that the Portuguese fleet should co-operate with the French and Danish in the maritime war, and that the persons and property of all Englishmen in Portugal should be forthwith seized. And it soon after appeared, that on the same day similar orders had been transmitted to the cabinet of Copenhagen. In a public assembly of all the ambassadors of Europe at the Tuileries, the Emperor Napoleon demanded of the Portuguese ambassador whether he had transmitted to the court of Lisbon his orders to join their fleet to the general maritime confederacy against England, and confiscate all English property within their dominions? And having said this, he immediately turned round to the Danish ambassador, and asked him, whether he had done the same? The note addressed to the Portuguese government was immediately communicated by its ministers to the British cabinet: that to the Danish was concealed, and its existence even denied. Thus, at the very time that the English expedition was, unknown to France, approaching the Danish shores,† the diplomatic papers and public words of Napoleon were affording decisive evidence of his preconceived designs against the Danish fleet, while the conduct of their government was equally characteristic of an inclination to slide, without opposition, into the required hostility against this country.¹

CHAP.
LI.
1807.

Aug. 12.

Aug. 16.

¹ Lord Wellesley's Statement. Parl. Deb. x. 345, and Lord Hawkesbury's, Ibid. x. 371.

But these diplomatic communications, little understood or attended to at the time by the bulk of the people, pro-

* *Ante*, Chap. XLVI., § 79.

† The British expedition landed at Copenhagen on the 16th August, the very day when Napoleon put this question to the Portuguese minister.—See *ante*, Chap. LI., § 28.

CHAP.
LI.
1807.
33.
General
feeling in
England on
the subject.

duced no general impression in England; and a very painful division of opinion existed for a considerable time, both as to the lawfulness of the expedition, and the justice of retaining the prizes which had been made. Whatever violence might have been meditated by the French Emperor, it was very generally said, it would have been better to have suffered him to perpetrate it, and then made open war on his vassals, than to forestall his iniquity in this manner by its imitation. This feeling was as creditable to the public mind, and the severe principles of morality which religious faith and long-established habits of freedom had produced in Great Britain, as the conception of the measure itself was honourable to the government. It was a memorable thing to see the people of England repudiate a triumph won, as it was thought, by injustice; disregard security purchased by the blood of the innocent; and look with shame on the proudest trophy of maritime conquest ever yet brought to a European harbour,* so long as a doubt existed as to the justice of the means by which it had been acquired. Contrasting this honourable feeling with the utter confusion of all moral principle which in France resulted from the Revolution, and the universal application to public measures of no other test than success, it is impossible to deny that the religious feelings and the tempered balance of power which in England both saved the country from a disastrous convulsion, and by restraining the excesses of freedom, preserved its existence, were equally favourable to the maintenance of that high standard of morality which, in nations as well as individuals, constitutes the only secure basis of durable prosperity.

* There is no example in modern times of such an armament being at once made prize and brought home by any power. At Trafalgar, only four ships of the nineteen taken were brought to the British harbours; at La Hogue, none of the prizes were saved, out of eighteen taken; and at Toulon, in 1793, no more than three sail of the line and three frigates were brought away out of the vast fleet there committed to the flames.—See SMOLLETT'S *History*, ii. 151; and *ante*, Chap. XIII., § 113.

The Copenhagen expedition, as might have been expected, led to vehement debates in both houses of parliament, which, though now of comparatively little importance, as the publication of the secret articles in the treaty of Tilsit has completely justified the measure, are of historical value, as indicating the opinions entertained, and the arguments advanced at the time in the country, on a subject of such vital importance to the honour and security of the empire.

CHAP.
LI.
1807.

On the part of the Opposition, it was strongly urged by Mr Granville Sharpe, Mr Ponsonby, and Lord Erskine—"The ground stated in the King's speech for the Copenhagen expedition was, that the government were in possession of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, in which it was stipulated that the Danish fleet should be employed against this country. If so, why are they not produced? It is said that Denmark has always been hostile to this country, and would gladly have yielded up her fleet for such a purpose on the first summons. If this is really the case, on what grounds is the charge supported? True, the ships of Copenhagen were in a certain degree of preparation, but not more so than they have been for the last half century. Was it probable that Denmark would have risked her East and West India possessions, the island of Zealand itself, and Norway, from an apprehension that Holstein and Jutland would be overrun by French troops? If history be consulted, it will be found that no considerable armament has crossed the Great Belt on the ice for a hundred and fifty years, in the face of an allied British and Swedish naval force. Such an attempt would never have been thought of, so that the Danes had no reason to tremble for their capital. When the Copenhagen expedition set sail, there were three hundred and fifty Danish ships in British harbours, with cargoes worth two millions; and when the British consul applied to the Chamber of Commerce, at the Danish capital, he received for answer,

34.
Arguments
in parlia-
ment against
the Copen-
hagen expe-
dition.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

that there was not the slightest room for apprehension, as no such circumstances existed as were likely to disturb the neutrality of Denmark. The plea, therefore, of impending danger, to justify so flagrant a breach of neutral rights, has not even for its basis the essential ground of correctness in point of fact.

35.
Argument
against its
necessity.

“ The vindication of this step, supposing that some danger had been shown to have existed, must rest upon its necessity; for the first principles of justice demonstrate, and the concurring testimony of all writers on the law of nations has established, that one belligerent could not be justified in taking its property from a neutral state, unless it is clearly established that its enemy meant and was able to take possession of it, and apply it to the purposes of its hostility. How, then, is it to be justified, when every appearance is against the opinion that the enemy had either the inclination or the power to convert the Danish navy into an instrument for our destruction? But this is not all: supposing it proved beyond the possibility of doubt, that Buonaparte intended to have seized the Copenhagen fleet, and had a force at his command adequate to that purpose, as he afterwards did with the fleet at Lisbon, are we to justify our robbery upon the plea that our enemy was meditating a similar spoliation, and that it was best to be beforehand with him? Is it not a principle of morality applicable alike to nations and individuals, that one wrong will not authorise another; and that, unless in extreme cases, even self-defence will not justify a deviation from the laws and usages of war? How much more, therefore, is an illegal act indefensible, committed not in retaliation for, but in anticipation of, a similar unjustifiable stretch on the enemy’s part! Better, far better, that Buonaparte should have carried his alleged designs into full effect, and united the Danish navy to his own, than that we should have stained our national character by an act, indefensible by those who were to profit, execrable in the estimation of those who were to suffer by it.

“A comparison of dates is alone sufficient to demonstrate the untenable grounds on which this expedition was sent out. The treaty of Tilsit was signed on the 8th July; the orders for the sailing of the expedition were issued on the 19th of the same month, and for several days previously the newspapers had announced its destination. How was it possible that in so short a time preparations could have been made for so vast an armament? Admitting that a military armament, to co-operate with Russia or Sweden, and act as occasion might require in the Baltic, had previously been resolved on, and was in a great state of forwardness, still the peculiar force employed in that expedition, the great quantity of battering cannon and besieging stores, as well as the vast amount of the naval force, proves that, long before the treaty of Tilsit was either signed or thought of, the resolution to spoliolate Denmark had been formed. We have got possession, indeed, of the Danish fleet; but is that the real or the principal object which we have to dread, in the great maritime confederacy which an inveterate enemy is forming against us? Do we esteem as nothing the now ardent and envenomed resentment of the Danish sailors; the dubious neutrality of Russia, converted by our rapacity into real and formidable hostility; the indignation of all neutral and maritime powers at our unparalleled injustice; the loss of the character which formerly rendered us the last asylum of freedom and independence throughout the world!

“Better, far better would it have been, to have had to combat the Danish fleet manned by disaffected seamen and fitted out by a reluctant government, than to have, as now, the fleets of France and Russia to fight, manned by the indignant and exasperated sailors of the north. With what countenance can we now reproach the French Emperor with his attack on Egypt, his subjugation of Switzerland, his overthrow of Portugal? We have ourselves furnished his justification; we have for ever shut

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

36.
Alleged
priority of
the deter-
mination
to despoil
Denmark
to the treaty
of Tilsit.

37.
Inveteracy
of Denmark
in conse-
quence of
the attack
on her.

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LI.

1807.

¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 254, 267,
355, 358,
1183, 1205.

38.
Answer of
Lord Wel-
lesley, Lord
Castlereagh,
and Mr
Canning.

ourselves out from the most powerful argument which we could ever have used to effect the future liberation of mankind. Will no recollection of our violence in Denmark lie heavy on our spirits when called upon to resist the violence of the enemy retaliating upon us? Will not the hostile myriads on the opposite shore be animated with fresh ardour and confidence, now that they are no longer following the banners of a desolating conqueror, but revisiting upon us the aggressions of our own fleets and armies? When we reflect on the little we have gained, and the much we have lost by this aggression, it clearly appears to have been not less impolitic and inexpedient, than iniquitous and unjust.”¹

Powerful as these arguments were, and warmly as they spoke to the best and noblest feelings of our nature, they were met by others not less cogent, and perhaps, when the period for impartial decision arrived, still more convincing. It was answered by Lord Wellesley, Lord Castlereagh, and Mr Secretary Canning: “It is needless to ask for additional documents to justify that great and saving measure, the expedition to Copenhagen. It was evident that after the battle of Trafalgar had annihilated his present hopes of maritime ascendancy, and the victory of Friedland had laid all the Continental states prostrate at his feet, all the efforts of Buonaparte would be turned against the power and resources of the British empire. Was any proof requisite of his desire to annihilate our independence, nay, to destroy our very existence as a nation; or was any necessary as to the mode in which, being actuated by such motives, he would proceed? How has he uniformly acted in his acquisitions at land? By compelling the powers whom he conquered or intimidated into an alliance to co-operate with him in his future hostility against such as still remained to be subdued. Was it to be supposed that that profound statesman and consummate general would not proceed in the same manner in the great object of his life, the destruction of

the maritime strength and resources of this country? Actuated by such motives and principles, is it conceivable that, after his great land victory, and when he had for the first time the maritime resources of the whole Continent at his command, he would hesitate to accomplish the inviting object of adding the Danish navy, lying in a manner within his grasp, to his resources?

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LI.
1807.

“ But the matter does not rest on probabilities and inferences. The French Emperor announced his intention almost in direct terms, immediately after the battle of Friedland, of uniting all the navies of Europe in one great confederacy against this country, and all his subsequent conduct has been regulated by the same principle. His plan was not confined to Denmark; it extended also to Portugal; these two powers were placed in exactly the same situation, and in both of these countries all British property was to be seized, and their respective courts compelled to unite their naval forces to those of France and Russia. It was well known that before the 1st September, the Emperor Napoleon publicly demanded of the Portuguese ambassador, in presence of all the envoys of foreign courts, whether he had transmitted his order to the court of Portugal, to join their fleets to the maritime confederacy against England, to shut their ports against the British flag, and confiscate the property of its subjects within the Portuguese territory; and having said this, he immediately turned round to the Danish minister, and asked if he had transmitted the same order to his own court. The cabinet of Lisbon had transmitted official intelligence to the government of Great Britain, that a formal demand had been made on them for the surrender of their fleet and the closing of their ports against English commerce, and the confiscation of all English property within their territories; and upon their failure to comply with the last only as the most unjust of these demands, they received a notification in the *Moniteur*, that the house of Braganza had

39.
Justification
of the expe-
dition af-
forded by
the conduct
of Napoleon.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

40.

Ease with
which Den-
mark might
have been
subjugated
by France.

ceased to reign—a clear demonstration of what fate awaited the Danish court if they hesitated a moment to obey the same haughty summons.

“Difficulties, it has been said, existed in the way of the French troops effecting the passage of the Great Belt, and compelling the Danes to join in the maritime confederacy against this country. These difficulties have been much exaggerated; for it is well known that Copenhagen depends almost entirely for its supply of provisions on Jutland and Holstein, and the occupation of these provinces by the French troops would soon starve the government into submission. It is idle to suppose that the Danish troops, which did not at the utmost exceed twenty thousand men, could cope with the united armies of France and Russia. Even supposing that, with the aid of British valour, they could for a time have made a successful stand, was it likely that they would not be paralysed by the dread of engaging in a conflict with these two colossal empires, whose strife had so recently resounded through the world? And even if the Danish cabinet, in a cause in which they were heartily engaged, possessed the firmness of the Roman senate, is it not notorious that their wishes, in this instance, would have led them to join their forces, at the first summons, to those of France? It is in vain to refer to the dangers which their transmarine possessions would run from the hostility of Great Britain. They braved these dangers in 1780, in prosecution of the object of the armed neutrality; they braved them in 1801, when the cannon of Nelson were pointed at their arsenals; though on neither of these occasions were they supported by such a gigantic Continental confederacy as now summoned them to take their place at its side. Their inclinations and secret bias have been clearly evinced by their public acts; and he has studied the history of the last fifty years to little purpose indeed, who does not perceive that they would enter the alliance, not as reluctant neutrals, but as ardent bellige-

rents, contending for objects which they have long had at heart.

“ The power of France, already sufficiently formidable by land, and daily receiving important additions by sea, would have been increased in the most alarming manner by the fleet and the arsenals of Denmark. Twenty ships of the line ready for sea, backed by a great supply of naval and military stores, constitute a force, in addition to that already possessed by the enemy, on which England, with all her maritime strength, cannot look without alarm. But this is not all. These twenty line-of-battle ships would speedily be joined by those of Russia and Sweden, amounting to at least as many more. The Russian fleet in the Euxine had already proceeded to Lisbon, to join the Portuguese squadron, and these together amounted to twenty ships of the line. Spain could furnish the like number, and thus Napoleon would soon have been enabled to direct against this country a centre of fifty ships of the line, drawn from Antwerp, Cherbourg, and Brest, with two wings each of forty, supplied by his northern and southern confederates. He is a bold man who can look unmoved on such a prospect. Had ministers not acted as they have done, they would have neglected their first and greatest duty, that of preserving the independence of their country, and with it the liberties of the world.

“ Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and that law loudly called for the adoption of this vigorous step, which has at least completely paralysed the designs of the confederates in the north seas. Here was an instrument of war within the grasp of our inveterate enemy : we interposed and seized it, as he was stretching out his hand for the same purpose, and that act of energy and wisdom has the hard epithets of rapine and impiety ascribed to it ! The bloodshed and devastation which occurred in the execution of this necessary act are indeed deeply to be deplored ; but the Danes had themselves to

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LI.

1807.

41.

Value of the
Danish fleet
to France.

42.

The expedi-
tion not
only a justi-
fiable mea-
sure, but a
wise one.

CHAP.
LI.

1807.

blame for these calamities, by refusing to deliver up their fleet in deposit till the conclusion of the war, as originally and rightly proposed by the English government. The expedition had been originally destined for co-operation with the Russians and Prussians; but upon the peace of Tilsit, with a promptitude and energy worthy of the highest commendation, ministers at once gave it a different destination; and though this bold step may now be unanimously blamed on the Continent by writers who take their opinions on every subject from the beck of one or other of the imperial despots who rule its empires, it will one day be applauded by an impartial posterity as the salvation of the British empire." Upon a division, both Houses supported ministers: the Commons by a majority of 253 to 108; the Peers by one of 105 to 48.¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 267, 287,
310, 342,
350, 383.

43.
The secret
article of the
treaty of
Tilsit re-
garding the
Danish fleet
afterwards
produced.

The great circumstance which long suggested a painful doubt as to the justice of the Copenhagen expedition, was the non-production of the alleged clauses in the secret treaty of Tilsit, of which ministers asserted they were in possession, which provided for the seizure of the fleet by France and Russia. Notwithstanding all the taunts with which they were assailed on this subject, they for long withheld their production from the public, and it came in consequence to be seriously doubted whether such an article really existed: until at length, in 1817, when the reasons for withholding it had ceased by the death of the persons by whom it had been revealed, the decisive article was publicly brought forward in parliament. Thus had the British cabinet the merit of having at once early discovered, and instantly acted upon, the hidden designs of the enemy; paralysed, by the vigour of their measures, the formidable naval force which was preparing against them in the north; and afterwards, for a long course of years, generously borne the whole load of opprobrium with which they were assailed, rather than,² by a premature publication of the secret information they

² Parl. Deb.
See the
Article,
Ante, ch.
xvi. § 79.

had received, endanger the persons by whom it had been transmitted.*

The negotiations contemplated by the treaty of Tilsit were not long of being set on foot. Early in August, the cabinet of St Petersburg tendered their good offices to that of London with a view to the conclusion of a general peace. To this Mr Canning answered, that Great Britain was perfectly willing to treat, on equitable terms, for so desirable an object; and required in return a frank communication of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, as the best pledge of the friendly and pacific intentions of his imperial majesty. Baron Budberg, on the part of Alexander, eluded this demand; and instead, entered into a statement of many grievances of Russia against this country, some of which, especially the want of co-operation when the contest was quivering in the balance on the Vistula, were too well founded. Matters were in this dubious state when intelligence arrived of the landing of the British forces in Zealand, and the demand made for the delivery, in deposit, of the Danish fleet. From the outset, the cabinet of St Petersburg manifested the utmost disquietude at this intelligence, and loudly protested against it as an uncalled-for violation of the law of nations. In reply, the British ambassador explicitly

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LI.

1807.

44.

Ineffectual
mediation of
Russia.
Aug. 5.

Aug. 29.

Sept. 2.

* The writers on the law of nations are clear that in such circumstances as the Danish fleet was here placed, its seizure was perfectly justifiable. "I may," says Grotius, "without considering whether it is merited or not, take possession of that which belongs to another, if I have reason to fear any evil from his holding it; but I cannot make myself master or proprietor of it, the property having nothing to do with the end which I propose. I can only keep possession of the thing seized till my safety is sufficiently provided for."—GROTIUS, b. iii. c. 1. § 2.—This was precisely what the English government proposed to Denmark.

Napoleon felt the Copenhagen blow most keenly, the more so that it was achieved by a vigour and decision in the English councils to which they had long been strangers, and which, in that instance, even surpassed his own promptitude. "The success of the attack on Copenhagen," says Fouché, "was the first derangement of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, in virtue of which the navy of Denmark was to have been put at the disposal of France. Since the catastrophe of Paul, I had never seen Napoleon in such a transport of rage. That which struck him most in this vigorous *coup-de-main* was the promptitude and resolution of the English minister."—*Mémoires de Fouché*, ii. 37.

Napoleon's
secret opinion
regarding the
Copenhagen
expedition.

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LI.

1807.

stated that his cabinet had received information of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, and the destined co-operation of the Danish fleet in a descent on the British shores, and called upon the Russian minister to disprove the assertion, by an unreserved communication of these hidden stipulations, and of the grounds on which France was willing to treat, and which appeared to the cabinet of St Petersburg so reasonable, that they gave them the additional weight of their interposition. The Russian cabinet, however, both when Baron Budberg had the direction of its foreign affairs, and after he was succeeded, early in September, by Count Romanzoff, constantly eluded this demand; and the intelligence of the capture of the Danish fleet gave them a plausible pretext for breaking off the negotiation, without complying with so inconvenient a requisition.* Alexander, however, in his confidential interviews with Savary and Romanzoff, openly admitted that he had been surprised by the vigour of the British cabinet; that he had calculated upon being able to postpone his declaration of war against England till December, when the Baltic would be closed by ice against their fleets; but that, if the French Emperor insisted on it, he was ready immediately to declare war.¹†

Upon the capture of Copenhagen being known in the Russian capital, the Emperor demanded of the English

Sept. 9. ¹ Parl. Deb.
x. 195, 200,
Sav. iii.
126. Thiers,
viii. 215.

Secret satisfaction with which it was viewed by Alexander.

* It appears, however, from the following passage in Sir Walter Scott, evidently founded on official information, that the cabinet of St Petersburg, though obliged to yield to circumstances, were secretly gratified at the vigorous and decisive blow struck at the Danish fleet. "An English officer of literary celebrity" (probably Sir R. Wilson) "was employed by Alexander, or those who were supposed to share his most secret councils, to convey to the British ministry the Emperor's expression of the secret satisfaction which his Imperial Majesty felt at the skill and dexterity which Britain had displayed in anticipating and preventing the purposes of France by her attack upon Copenhagen. Her ministers were invited to communicate freely with the Czar, as with a prince who, though obliged to yield to circumstances, was nevertheless as much as ever attached to the cause of European independence."—SCOTT'S *Life of Napoleon*, vi. 24. Certainly of all the remarkable qualities of Alexander's mind, his profound power of dissimulation was the most extraordinary; and this was the opinion formed by Lord Cathcart, and all who had an opportunity of seeing him even in the most unreserved and confidential manner.

† " 'Vous le savez,' dit Alexandre au Général Savary, 'dans plusieurs entre-

ambassador whether the fleet would be restored at the conclusion of a general peace. To this Lord Leveson Gower replied, that "the object for which the expedition had been undertaken—viz. the removing of the Danish fleet, during the continuance of hostilities, beyond the reach of France—having been accomplished, the English government was perfectly willing to renounce any advantage which could be derived from the continuance of the war with Denmark, and earnestly pressed the Emperor to recommend neutrality on these conditions to the Prince-Royal." These moderate views so far prevailed with the Russian cabinet, that a note was presented by them to Savary, to signify the wish of the Emperor that the neutrality of Denmark should be re-established; and there was every prospect of the peace of the north being undisturbed by any further hostility, when the arrival of a messenger from Paris, with decisive instructions from Napoleon, such as had been expected by the Czar, at once put an end to the negotiation. He brought a peremptory demand for the immediate execution of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, and the instant closing of the Russian harbours against the ships of Great Britain. The Emperor Alexander was startled by the imperative tone of the mandate, as, since his return to St Petersburg, he had been endeavouring to withdraw from his promises in

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LI.

1807.

45.

Rupture of
that power
with Eng-
land.
Oct. 29.

Nov. 2.

Nov. 4.

tiens fort longs, nos efforts pour la paix aboutissent à la guerre. Je m'y attendais; mais, je l'avoue, je ne m'attendais ni à l'expédition de Copenhague, ni à l'arrogance du cabinet Britannique. Mon parti est pris, et je suis prêt à tenir mes engagements. Dans mon entrevue avec l'Empereur Napoléon, nous avons calculé que, si la guerre devait continuer, je serais amené à me prononcer en Décembre; et je désirais que ce ne fût pas avant, pour n'avoir la guerre avec les Anglais qu'après la clôture de la Baltique. Peu importe, je me prononcerai tout de suite. Dites à votre maître que, s'il le désire, je vais renvoyer Lord Gower. Cronstadt est armé, et si les Anglais veulent s'y essayer, ils verront qu'avoir affaire aux Russes est autre chose que d'avoir affaire à des Turcs ou à des Espagnols. Cependant je ne déciderai rien sans un courrier de Paris, car il ne faut pas nous hasarder à contrarier les calculs de Napoléon. D'ailleurs je voudrais, avant de rompre, que mes flottes fussent rentrées dans les ports Russes. Quoi qu'il en soit, je suis entièrement disposé à tenir la conduite qui conviendra le mieux à votre maître. Qu'il m'envoie même, si cela lui convient, une note toute rédigée, et je la ferai remettre à Lord Gower en même temps que des passe-ports."—THIERS, *Consulat et l'Empire*, viii. 215.

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1807.

¹ See the whole papers in *Parl. Deb.* x. 195, 218. Sav. iii. 126, 128.

that particular. But it was too late: Savary appealed to his personal honour pledged at Tilsit, and the Emperor, at whatever hazard to himself or his dominions, felt himself bound to comply.^{1*} Next day a note was presented to the British ambassador, breaking off all relations between the two countries, requiring his immediate departure from St Petersburg, and reannouncing the principles of the armed neutrality; and on

Concurring statement of the English and French ambassadors on the causes of the rupture.

* The statements of the French and English ambassadors on this point are very material, as not only are they perfectly in unison with each other, but they distinctly prove that the rupture with Russia had no connexion with the Copenhagen expedition, but was the result of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit. Savary says—"In the first days of November I received a courier from the Emperor, who brought instructions from the minister of foreign affairs to insist upon the execution of *one of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit*. On the day following I said to the Emperor, at a special audience, Sir, I am charged with the desire of my master that you should unite your force to his to compel England to listen to 'his proposals.' 'Very well,' replied the Emperor, '*I have given him my word that I would do so, and I will keep my promise*'; see Romanzoff; and return to speak with me on the subject.' On the day following I returned; and the Emperor then said that it had been agreed that France and Russia should unite to summon England, but that the mediation of Russia was first to be proposed, which should still be done. I represented that this had already taken place, and that England had refused his mediation. He mused a moment, and then said, 'I understand you, and since your master desires it, I am quite disposed to fulfil my engagements. I will to-day give orders to Romanzoff.' Two days afterwards the hostile note against England was issued, and the British ambassador demanded his passports. Having gained this much, though well aware that the principal object of Napoleon was to strike at the English commerce, I deemed it expedient to shut my eyes to the time given to the British vessels to clear out from the Russian harbours."—SAVARY, iii. 126, 128. Lord L. Gower says in his despatch to Mr Canning, November 4, 1807,—“Some members of the council who were consulted on the matter, advised the Emperor not to reject so fair an opportunity of re-establishing the tranquillity of the north of Europe; and their opinion was so far taken that a note was written to General Savary, with the view of engaging the French government to consent to the restoration of the neutrality of Denmark. The French general has remonstrated violently against this measure; and the Russian cabinet, alarmed at the violence of his language, is undecided what answer to return to the overtures received from England.” And on 8th November he wrote to the same minister, “The enclosed note, the contents of which are so extremely important,” (they contained a declaration of war,) “has been produced by a peremptory demand, brought by the last messenger from Paris, for the *immediate execution of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit*; and the French mission boasts that, after some difficulty, they have gained a complete victory, and have carried not only this act of hostility against England, but also every other point essential to the success of Buonaparte's views. I shall ask my passports to-morrow.”—LORD L. GOWER to MR CANNING, *St Petersburg, 4th and 8th Nov. 1807*.—*Parl. Deb.* x. 215, 216.

the day following, Lord Leveson Gower set out for the British shores.*

This declaration of war against Great Britain was attended by a summons to Sweden to join in the league against the latter kingdom; and it soon appeared, from the vigorous preparations for the prosecution of the war in that quarter, that the cession of Finland to Russia had, as already explained, been arranged at Tilsit, and

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1807.

46.
The Russians declare war against Sweden.
Oct. 6.

* The Russian manifesto bore—"The great value which the Emperor attached to the friendship of his Britannic Majesty enhanced the regret at perceiving that that monarch altogether separated himself from him. Twice has the Emperor taken up arms in a cause which was directly that of England, and he solicited in vain from England such a co-operation as her own interest demanded. He did not demand that her troops should be united to his; he desired only they should effect a diversion. He was astonished that in her own cause she did not act in union with him, but, coolly looking on the bloody spectacle of a war which had been kindled at her will, she, instead of co-operating, sent troops to attack Buenos Ayres and Alexandria. And what sensibly touched the heart of the Emperor, was to perceive that England, contrary to her good faith and the express terms of treaties, troubled at sea the commerce of his subjects at the very time that the blood of the Russians was shed in the most glorious of warfares, which drew down and fixed against the armies of his Imperial Majesty all the military force of the French Emperor, with whom the English then were and still are at war. Nevertheless, when the two Emperors made peace, the Emperor of Russia, faithful to his old friendship, proffered his mediation to effect a general pacification: but the King of England rejected the mediation. The treaty between Russia and France was intended to procure a general peace; but at that very moment England suddenly quitted that apparent lethargy to which she had abandoned herself: though it was to cast upon the north of Europe firebrands which were to light anew the flames of war. Her fleets and her armies appeared upon the coasts of Denmark, to execute there an act of violence of which history, so fertile in wickedness, does not afford a parallel example. A peacefully disposed and moderate power sees itself assaulted as if it had been forging plots and meditating the ruin of England; and all to justify its prompt and total spoliation. The Emperor, wounded in his dignity, in the interests of his people, in his engagements with the courts of the North, by this act of violence committed in the Baltic, did not dissemble his resentment against England; new proposals were made by England for the neutrality of Denmark, but to these the Emperor would not accede. His Imperial Majesty, therefore, breaks off all communication with England, proclaims anew the principles of the Armed Neutrality, and annuls all conventions inconsistent with its spirit."—*Parl. Deb.* x. 218, 221.

Russian
manifesto.

To this manifesto it was replied, in a long and able declaration by Great Britain, drawn up by Mr Canning—"His Majesty was apprised of the secret conditions which had been imposed upon Russia in the conferences at Tilsit; but he indulged a hope that a review of the transactions of that unfortunate negotiation, and its effects upon the glory of the Russian name, and the interests of the Russian empire, would have led the Emperor to extricate himself from these trammels, contracted in a moment of despondency and

Declaration
by Great
Britain.
Dec. 18.

CHAP.
LI.
1807.

that the Czar was resolved to add that important province, lying so near his capital, to his extensive dominions, as soon as the necessary preparations could be made for

alarm. His Majesty deemed it necessary to demand a specific explanation from Russia with respect to these arrangements with France, the concealment of which could not but confirm the impression already received as to their character and tendency. The demand was made in the most amicable manner, and with every degree of delicacy and forbearance; but the declaration of war by the Emperor of Russia proves but too distinctly that this forbearance was misplaced. It proves, unhappily, that the influence acquired over Russia by the inveterate enemy of England, is such as to excite a causeless animosity between the two nations, whose long connexion and mutual interests prescribed the most intimate union and co-operation. The King of England does full justice to the motives which induced the Emperor of Russia twice to take up arms in the common cause. But surely the Emperor of Russia, on the last occasion, had a more pressing cause to join his arms to those of his ally, the King of Prussia, than Great Britain, then actually at war with that power. The reference to the war with the Porte is peculiarly unfortunate, when it was undertaken at the instigation of Russia, and solely for the purpose of maintaining the Russian interests against those of France. If, however, the peace of Tilsit was really a punishment for the inactivity of Great Britain, it was singularly unfortunate that it took place at a time when England was making the most strenuous exertions in the common cause, and had actually got that great armament prepared, which she has since been obliged to employ to disconcert a combination directed against her own immediate interests and security. The complaint of vexations to Russian commerce is a mere imaginary grievance, never heard of before, and now put forth only to countenance the exaggerated declamations by which France strives to inflame the animosity of the other Continental powers. The vindication of the Copenhagen expedition is already before the world, and Russia has it in her power at once to disprove the basis on which it is erected, by producing the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit. These secret articles were not communicated to his Majesty—they are not yet communicated—not even that which prescribed a time for the acceptance, by Great Britain, of the proffered mediation of Russia. Even after this unworthy concealment, however, so unsuitable to the dignity of an independent sovereign, the mediation was not refused: it was conditionally accepted, and the conditions were a communication of the basis on which the proposed treaty was to be founded, and of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit; conditions to which the Emperor of Russia could not object, as the first was the same which the Emperor had himself annexed to the mediation of Austria between himself and France, not four months before; and the second was clearly called for by the previous and long-established relations between Russia and Great Britain. Instead of granting either of these demands, Russia declares war.” *English Declaration, December 18, 1807; Parl. Deb. x. 118-122.* It will be observed how studiously, in these diplomatic papers, Russia eludes allusion to the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit. “The capture of the Danish fleet,” says Hardenberg, “was not the *cause*, but the *pretext*, of Russia’s rupture with England. The cabinet of St Petersburg, if the truth was known, was not sorry of so fair an opportunity for getting quit of all restraints upon its meditated hostilities in the north, as it already was in the south, of Europe; and, notwithstanding all the loud declamations against the Copenhagen expedition, it beheld with more satisfaction the success of England in that quarter than it would have done the

its subjugation.* As fast as the troops arrived from the Niemen at St Petersburg, they were passed through to the frontiers of Finland; and such a force was soon accumulated there as rendered hopeless the preservation of that bright jewel of the Swedish crown. A formal declaration of war was, however, delayed till the spring following, when the preparations of the cabinet of St Petersburg were completed, and the season of the year enabled them to resume military operations. In the interval, the Swedish government had so carefully abstained from giving any cause of complaint to the northern autocrat, that, when he came to assign to the world his reasons for a rupture, he could find no ground whatever on which to justify his hostilities, but that the Swedish monarch had not acceded to his proposal to break with England, and join his forces to those of Russia, and was desirous of preserving throughout the contest a strict neutrality—a pretext for a war, which came with a singularly bad grace from a power which affected to feel such indignation at the English government for having, for a similar reason, and when well informed of the secret designs of France against the Danish fleet, commenced hostilities against the court of Copenhagen.¹ Napoleon anxiously encouraged the Czar in his designs against Finland, in the hope of

¹ Thiers,
iii. 223.

junction of the Danish fleet to the naval resources of the French Emperor.”—HARDENBERG, x. 49.

* “Quant à la Suède,” dit Alexandre à Savary, ‘je ne suis pas en mesure, et je demande le temps de réorganiser mes régiments fort maltraités par la dernière guerre, et fort éloignés de la Finlande. En outre sur ce théâtre mon armée ne me suffit pas. Dans les basfonds des golfes du Nord on se sert beaucoup de flotilles à rames. Les Suédois en ont une très-nombreuse; la mienne n’est pas encore équipée, et je ne veux pas m’exposer à un échec de la part d’un si petit état. Dites donc à votre maître qu’aussitôt mes *moyens préparés*, j’accablerai la Suède, qu’il me faut attendre Décembre ou Janvier. Je suis prêt à déclarer contre les Anglais immédiatement. Je suis même d’avis que nous ne nous bornions pas là, et que nous exigions de l’Autriche son adhésion, *volontaire ou forcée, à la coalition Continentale*. J’ai vu Napoleon, je me flatte de lui avoir inspiré une partie des sentiments qu’il m’a inspirés à moi-même, et je suis certain qu’il est sincère. Pour moi je lui promets une *franchise entière*, et j’en attends une semblable de sa part. Oh! si je pouvais le voir comme à Tilsit, tous les jours, à toute heure! quel entretien que le sien! quel esprit! quel génie!”—THIERS, viii. 215, 217.

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47.

Invasion
and conquest
of Finland
by Russia.
Feb. 6, 1808.

diverting his ambition from the Danube, and leaving the stage clear there for his own projects.

This declaration was immediately followed by a proclamation to the Fins by the Russian commander, in which he declared that he entered their territory with no hostile intentions, and solely to preserve them from the horrors of war, and invited them to abstain from hostilities or resistance to Russia: a promise instantly belied by the formal occupation of the whole provinces by the Muscovite forces, and the establishment of Russian authorities in every part of them, excepting those fortresses still held by Swedish garrisons. Meanwhile the King of Sweden, faithful to his engagements, relying on the support of Great Britain, and encouraged by the great blow struck at the Danish power by the English armament, bade defiance to the united hostility of France and Russia. He replied to the Russian manifesto in a dignified proclamation—a model for greater powers and more prosperous fortunes—in which he bitterly complained of the invasion of his dominions, and the incitement to revolt held out to his subjects by the Russian forces, without any declaration of war or ground of hostility; contrasted the present subservience of Russia to France with the repeated declarations she had made that its ambition was inconsistent with the liberties of Europe, and her solemn engagements to conclude no peace with that power which should be “inconsistent with the glory of the Russian name, the security of the empire, the sanctity of alliances, and the general security of Europe;”¹ and justly observed that the present war, based on the avowed design of Russia to dictate all their foreign connexions to the northern powers, was undertaken for no other object but to add Finland to the Russian dominions, and compel Sweden to sacrifice her fleet and commerce as a security for Cronstadt and Revel.²

¹ See Russian manifesto, Aug. 30, 1806.

² Ann. Reg. 1808, 237, 303, and 307. Sav. iii. 112.

It was not to be supposed that Denmark, after the grievous though unavoidable loss she had sustained, would

not resent to the utmost of her power the hostility of Great Britain. She threw herself, accordingly, without reserve into the arms of France, and made every preparation for the most active hostility ; though the loss of her fleet and dismantling of her arsenal deprived her of the means of carrying on any efficient warfare, and, on the other hand, exposed her commerce and colonies to total destruction. The Prince-Royal, carried away by an excusable resentment, overlooked all these considerations, and not only constantly refused to ratify the capitulation of Copenhagen, but concluded, soon after, a treaty offensive and defensive with the Emperor Napoleon, which, by a singular coincidence, was signed on the very day on which Junot, at the head of a powerful army, commenced his march from Bayonne to enforce a similar obedience to the secret resolutions adopted at Tilsit from the court of Lisbon. Meanwhile Napoleon wrote to Alexander, informing him of the treaty with Denmark, and again pressing him to invade Finland, in order to compel the submission of Sweden ; and thus, by having the command of both coasts, shut the Baltic against the English fleets.¹

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LI.

1807.

48.

Denmark
enters cor-
dially into
the war.

Oct. 16.

¹ Hard. x.
48, 49.
Thiers, viii.
225.

While a new war was thus kindling from the ashes of the old one in the north of Europe, Russia was steadily prosecuting those ambitious designs on her southern frontier, the unmolested liberty to advance in which had constituted the principal lure held out by Napoleon to gain her alliance on the shores of the Niemen. In this attempt, however, she did not experience all the facilities which she expected. As the main object of Napoleon, in the negotiations at Tilsit, was to accelerate the rupture of Russia with Great Britain, and procure her accession to the Continental System,² so the ruling principle of Russia was to obtain facilities for the prosecution of her designs against the Ottoman empire, and in the mean time to postpone the evacuation of the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, till she was better prepared to

49.
Affairs of
Russia and
Turkey.² Bign. vi.
429.

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carry her projects of conquest into effect. Napoleon, as already stated, had agreed at Tilsit, that the evacuation might be indefinitely postponed;* but hardly had he returned to Paris, when, being engrossed with his ambitious projects in the Spanish peninsula, and unable to appropriate to himself, in consequence, his anticipated share of the Ottoman spoils, while at the same time he felt the utmost disquietude at the approach of Russia to the Dardanelles, he repented of the ready consent which he had given to the advances of Russia in that direction, and became desirous to throw every obstacle in the way of their further prosecution. In terms of the stipulation to that effect in the former treaty, the mediation of France had been offered to the Divan, which having been accepted, and an armistice concluded, nothing remained to justify the prolonged occupation of the principalities. Russia, however, was too great a power to leave the seeds of any misunderstanding with it, when Napoleon was engaged in his projects in the Spanish peninsula; and accordingly he soon after wrote to Alexander, that the armistice on the Danube had been concluded without his authority; that he disapproved of it; that the Russian troops might be continued in the principalities; that as to the final partition of the Ottoman empire, that was so grave a question, that it required mature consideration; and that France and Russia, united, might accomplish the greatest things yet seen in modern times.¹†

Aug. 24.

¹ Bign. vi.
429. Hard.
x. 51. Sav.
iii. 110.
Thiers, viii.
222, 225.

It appeared the more necessary to bring it to a termi-

* "Vous pouvez le traîner en longue."—*Ante*, Chap. XLVI. § 80, note.

† Napoleon wrote to Alexander,—“Qu’il était étranger à la rédaction de l’armistice avec la Porte, qu’il le désapprouvait (ce qui emportait l’approbation tacite de l’occupation prolongée des provinces du Danube), et que, quant au maintien ou au partage de l’empire Ottoman, cette question était si grave, si intéressante dans le présent et l’avenir, qu’il avait besoin d’y penser mûrement; qu’il ne pouvait en traiter par écrit, et que c’était avec M. de Tolstoy qu’il se proposait de l’approfondir; qu’il la réservait à cet ambassadeur, et que c’était même afin de l’attendre qu’il avait retardé son départ pour l’Italie, où il était cependant pressé de se rendre. *Unissons-nous*, disait Napoléon à Alexandre, et nous accomplirons les plus grandes choses des temps modernes.”—NAPOLEON to ALEXANDER, 17th Sept. 1807; THIERS, *Consulat et l’Empire*, viii. 225.

nation, as the Turks, though they gladly availed themselves of the French mediation at first, did so in the belief that they were to obtain thereby the evacuation of Moldavia and Wallachia. But no sooner did they discover that this was not really intended, and that the Muscovite standards were still to remain on the Danube, than they loudly expressed their resolution to continue, in preference, the conflict. They said, with justice, "In what worse situation could we be, if the French, instead of being victorious, had been beaten in Poland? Is this the Emperor's care for his allies, whom he has drawn into the conflict, to leave their richest provinces in the hands of their enemies?" Savary, therefore, received orders to insist in the mildest possible manner, but still to insist, for the evacuation of the principalities; and to consent to the prolonged occupation of them by the Russian forces, only on condition that Alexander sanctioned the continued possession of Silesia by the French troops. Napoleon strongly contended that the occupation of Wallachia and Moldavia should not take place, according to the secret treaty of Tilsit, till the French were in a condition to take possession of Greece and Albania, which they were not at present; but he offered to wink at the Russians extending their empire to the Danube, provided Alexander would agree to indemnify him by the cession of Silesia and other provinces of Prussia, reducing that power to 2,000,000 souls.* This act of spoliation of an allied power, Alex-

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50.

Alienation
of the Turks
from the
French.

* "Si la violation du traité de Tilsit," disait Napoleon à lui, "elle ne doit être pas au profit d'une seule des deux parties contractantes. Elle doit être, pour la France, dans une partie des états de la Prusse, dont ce traité stipule la restitution—partie égale, en population, en ressources, en richesses, aux deux provinces Turques. De cette manière l'allié de la France, l'allié de la Russie, éprouverait une perte égale. La Prusse, il est vrai, n'aurait pas plus qu'à-peu-près deux millions d'habitants, mais il ne serait pas grand malheur à la Prusse à subir ce nouvel affaiblissement. La ruine totale de l'empire Ottoman doit être rec lé jusqu'au moment où le partage de ses vastes débris pourra se faire d'une manière plus avantageuse pour l'une et pour l'autre, sans avoir à craindre qu'une autre puissance, leur ennemi, vienne s'approprier, par l'acquisition de l'Egypte et des îles, les plus riches dépouilles."—NAPOLEON to ALEXANDER, 22d Dec. 1807; BIGNON, vii. 43, 44.

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1807.

ander, much to his credit, positively refused to accede to.* At length the respective pretensions of these high contracting powers were arranged in this manner, that France agreed to Russia continuing in the possession of the Danubian principalities, and Russia consented to the prolonged occupation of Silesia by the French troops. This arrangement for the time settled their differences; the two autocrats readily consented to wink at their mutual infractions of the rights of other states; each abandoned an ally to the tender mercies of an enemy; and as the Turks found that they had been betrayed by Napoleon, and some account of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, which provided for their partition, had reached them, they declined the further intervention of the French, and prepared to renew the war.¹ †

* “‘Comment,’ s’écria Alexandre, ‘pourrais-je consentir à partager, de fait, les dépouilles d’un malheureux prince que l’Empereur a désigné à la France et à l’Europe comme ayant été rétabli à ma considération?’”—BIGNON, vii. 46, 47.

† The negotiation between Savary and Romanzoff, and his conversations with Alexander himself on this important subject, which are given in the secret and confidential correspondence of Napoleon, are highly curious, as indicating the ulterior ambitious views of the great empires which they severally represented, and the seeds of that jealousy which, in the midst of unbounded protestations of present regard, was laying the foundation of future and mortal hostility. By despatches from Napoleon, dated Fontainebleau, Oct. 14, 1807, Savary was required to inquire what was the cause which had retarded the evacuation of Moldavia and Wallachia by the Russian troops, and to observe that peace could not be re-established between Russia and the Porte till that evacuation had taken place, as it was the condition which must precede the armistice which was to be the foundation of the definitive treaty; that the delay to evacuate could not fail to annul the armistice which had been concluded, and rekindle the flames of war between Russia and the Ottoman Porte. In reply, the Emperor Alexander, after alleging various insignificant reasons for not commencing the evacuation, observed:—“Circumstances now appear to require a deviation in this particular from the strict letter of the treaty of Tilsit. The latest advices from Vienna and Odessa concur in stating that the influence of France has declined at Constantinople: it is even said that Lord A. Paget, the English ambassador, has embarked on board Lord Collingwood’s fleet in the Dardanelles. There is every probability that a treaty will be concluded between England and the Porte hostile to you, and consequently to me; and that, if I should evacuate these provinces, I should soon have to re-enter them in order to avert the war from my own frontiers. I must revert to what the Emperor Napoleon said to me, not once, but ten times, *at Tilsit, in respect to these provinces*, and I have more confidence in these assurances than in all the reasons of expedience or policy which may subsequently appear to gainsay them. Why, then, renounce my present advantages, when past experience tells me so clearly what will ensue if I evacuate these provinces?

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 742.
State Pa-
pers. Sav.
iii. 110, 111.
Bign. vi.
429, 430.
Hard. x. 51,
53. Corresp.
Conf. de
Nap. vii.
364, 385.

Curious se-
cret despatch
from Savary
at St Peters-
burg to Na-
poleon.

Meanwhile Napoleon had set out for Italy, where great political changes were in progress. Destined, like all the subordinate thrones which surrounded the French nation, to share in the rapid mutations which its government underwent, the kingdom of Italy was soon called upon to accept a change in its constitution. Napoleon, in consequence, suppressed the legislative body, and substituted in its room a senate, which was exclusively intrusted with the power of submitting observations to government on the public wants, and of superintending the budget and public expenditure. As the members of this senate were nominated and paid by government, this last shadow of representative institutions became a perfect mockery. Nevertheless the great conqueror was received with unbounded adulation by all the towns of Italy; their

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1807.

51.

Changes in
the constitution of the
Italian
states.

Nov. 20.

Even supposing that you have the upper hand at Constantinople, you can never prevent bands of insurgents from crossing the Danube, and renewing the pillage of these provinces: the orders of the Porte are null a mile from Constantinople. In our conversations at Tilsit, your Emperor often said, that he was noways set on that evacuation; *that it might be indefinitely postponed; that it was not possible any longer to tolerate the Turks in Europe; that he left me at liberty to drive them into Asia.* It was only on a subsequent occasion that he went back from his word so far as to speak of *leaving the Turks Constantinople and some of the adjacent provinces.*"

Savary replied, "Russia can always renew the war if you find it advisable. It is needless to refer to the engagements between the two monarchs; the Emperor Napoleon has too much confidence in the honour of the Emperor Alexander to doubt the validity of the reasons which have hitherto prevented him from executing these secret engagements: but still he is desirous of seeing them carried into effect, as a peace between Russia and the Porte is all that remains to complete the execution of the stipulations of the public treaty of Tilsit. *All that the Emperor Napoleon has said at Tilsit shall be religiously executed*; nor is there anything in the secret treaty which is calculated to thwart the desires of Russia. Nay, the surest and most expeditious mode to arrive at it, is to carry into execution the public treaty; for we must conclude an armistice with the Turks before a treaty is concluded; *or do you propose at once to write their epitaph?*"

"I yesterday had a long interview," replied Alexander, "with the Swedish ambassador, and strongly urged him to enter into all the views of France, and represented the risk he would run in not making common cause with her and Russia. Meanwhile the march of the troops continues; in seven or eight days the last division will have arrived, and fifty thousand men will be ready to commence the war on the frontiers of Finland. When you demanded from me a declaration of war against England, I was well aware it was no trifling change of policy which was required; no slight change of system, which could be altered as soon as adopted. *Had I conceived it to be such, I would never have put my name to it*; but I viewed it in a more extended light. What am I

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deputies, who waited upon him at Milan, vied with each other in elegant flattery. He was the Redeemer of France, but the Creator of Italy: they had supplicated heaven for his safety, for his victories; they offered him the tribute of their eternal love and fidelity. Napoleon received their adulation in the most gracious manner; but he was careful not to lose sight of the main object of his policy—the consolidation of his dominions, the rendering them all dependent on his imperial crown, and the fostering of a military spirit among his subjects. “You will always find,” said he, “the source of your prosperity, the best guarantee alike of your institutions and of your independence, in the constant union of the iron crown with the imperial crown of France. But to obtain this felicity you must show yourselves worthy of it. It is time that the Italian youth should seek some more ennobling employment than idling away their lives at the feet of women; and that the women of Italy should spurn every lover who cannot lay claim to their favour by the exhibition of honourable scars.”¹

¹ Bot. iv.
224, 230.
Hard. x. 26.
Montg. vi.
293.

52.
Union of
Parma and
Placentia
to France.
Great works
at Milan.
State of
Italy.
Dec. 10.

From Milan the Emperor travelled by Verona and Padua to Venice; he there admired the marble palaces, varied scenery, and gorgeous architecture of the Queen of the Adriatic, which appeared to extraordinary advantage amidst illuminations, fireworks, and rejoicings; and, returning to Milan, arranged with an authoritative hand, all the affairs of the peninsula. The discontent of Melzi, who still retained a lingering partiality for the democratic institutions which he had vainly hoped to see established in his country, was stifled by the title of Duke of required to do? said I to myself. To prepare great events which will cause the memory of mournful ones to be forgotten, and put the two states in such political relations as can never be disturbed. Impressed with these ideas, and *within twenty-four hours after your requisition, I did what you desired*, though that was not only noways conducive to our interests, but, on the contrary, exposed us to very serious losses. *Now you insist that I should make war on Sweden: I am ready to do so; my armies are on her frontier; but what return are we to obtain for so many sacrifices? Wallachia and Moldavia are the recompense which the nation expects, and you wish to bereave us of them. What reply can we make to our people, if, after their evacuation, they ask us what*

Lodi. Tuscany was taken from the King of Etruria, on whom Napoleon had settled it, and united to France by the title of the department of the Taro; while magnificent public works were set on foot at Milan to dazzle the ardent imagination of the Italians, and console them for the entire loss of their national independence and civil liberty. The cathedral was daily adorned with fresh works of sculpture; its exterior decorated and restored to its original purity, while thousands of pinnacles and statues rose on all sides, glittering in spotless brilliancy in the blue vault of heaven. The Forum of Buonaparte was rapidly advancing; the beautiful basso-relievos of the arch of the Simplon already entranced the admiring gaze of thousands; the roads of the Simplon and Mount Cenis were kept in the finest order, and daily attracted fresh crowds of strangers to the Italian plains. But in the midst of all this external splendour, the remains of which still throw a halo round the recollection of the French domination in Italy, the finances of all the states were involved in hopeless embarrassment, and suffering of the most grinding kind pervaded all classes of the people. The public expenditure of the kingdom of Italy had risen to 120,000,000 francs (£5,000,000;) the annual tribute of a million sterling to France was severely felt; ten thousand men had recently been raised by conscription to fill up the chasms in the army; and the misery of Piedmont, Tuscany, and the Venetian states, from the enormous contributions levied by the French troops, and the total stoppage of foreign commerce, was such as to draw forth the

benefits are to compensate to them for the manifold losses consequent on the war with England?" — See the whole diplomatic papers and conversations in SAVARY'S *Secret Despatch to Napoleon, St Petersburg, 18th November 1807*; *Corresp. Conf. de Napoleon*, vii. 564, 585.—That confidential despatch reveals more of the real nature of the secret engagements at Tilsit than any other documents in existence; and demonstrates that both the Swedish and English wars were the result of those engagements, and noways connected with the Copenhagen expedition, which is never once mentioned as a ground of complaint against Great Britain, by either Savary, Alexander, or his minister Romanzoff.

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most piteous lamentations from the native historians. In the midst of these great designs, however, the Emperor abated nothing of his inveterate hostility against British commerce. Eugene received orders to invade Etruria with four thousand men suddenly, so as to fall on Pisa and Leghorn before time could be afforded for the removal or secreting of British merchandise, which was all to be confiscated for the benefit of the imperial treasury. At the same time General Lemarrois was directed to invade the Roman provinces of Urbino, Macerata, and Fermo, to seize English merchandise of every description, and occupy all the important ports along the sea-coast, with a view to ulterior operations against Sicily and the Ionian Isles. Lemarrois was enjoined to observe narrowly the disposition of the people in the Papal States, and if any inclination was evinced to escape from the government of priests, and range themselves under that of Eugene, to offer no obstacle to such a revolution.¹

¹Thiers, viii.
26, 27. Bot.
iv. 230, 234.
Hard. x.
26.

53.
Encroach-
ments of
France on
Holland,
Germany,
and Italy.
Occupation
of Rome,
and dismem-
berment of
its pro-
vinces.
Nov. 11.

Jan. 21.

Feb. 2, 1808.

The encroachments thus made on the Italian peninsula were not the only ones which Napoleon effected, in consequence of the liberty to dispose of western Europe acquired by him at the treaty of Tilsit. The territory of the great nation was rounded also on the side of Germany and Holland. On the 11th of November, the important town and territory of Flushing were ceded to France by the King of Holland, who obtained in return merely an elusory equivalent in East Friesland. On the 21st of January following, a decree of the senate united to the French empire, besides these places, the important towns of Kehl, Cassel, and Wesel, on the right bank of the Rhine. Shortly after, the French troops, who had already taken possession of the whole of Tuscany, in compliance with the orders already noticed, and under pretence of a resignation forced upon the Queen of Etruria, invaded the Roman territories, and made themselves masters of the ancient capital of the

world. They immediately occupied the castle of St Angelo and the gates of the city, and entirely dispossessed the papal troops. Two months afterwards, an imperial decree of Napoleon severed the provinces of Ancona, Urbino, Macerata, and Camerino, which had formed part of the ecclesiastical estates, under the gift of Charlemagne, for nearly a thousand years, and annexed them to the kingdom of Italy. The reason assigned for this spoliation was, "That the actual sovereign of Rome has constantly declined to declare war against the English, and to coalesce with the Kings of Italy and Naples for the defence of the Italian peninsula. The interests of these two kingdoms, as well as of the armies of Naples and Italy, require that their communications should not be interrupted by a hostile power." The importance of these acquisitions, great as they undoubtedly were, especially in Italy, was not so momentous as the principles on which they were founded, and the ulterior acquisitions to which they evidently pointed. France now, without disguise, assumed the right of annexing neutral and independent states to its already extensive dominions, by no other authority than the decree of its own legislature. The natural boundaries, so long held forth as the limits of the great nation, were not merely overstepped, but publicly disavowed as an undue restriction of its dimensions. By extending its territory beyond the Rhine, it was plain that Holland and the north of Germany were soon to be incorporated with its dominions; by stretching across the Alps, it was evident that, ere long, Rome and the whole of Italy would form an integral part of the dominions of Napoleon. So boundless had the ambition of the French Emperor now become, and so intent was he on all acquisitions which might be of advantage to him in his hostility against English commerce, that he did not scruple to declare that, in existing circumstances, the loss of Corfu would be the greatest possible misfortune which

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1807.

April 2,
1808.

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could happen to the empire.* These distant marine possessions were of such importance, as connected not merely with Napoleon's ambitious designs in the Levant, but with his vast projects for the subjugation of Great Britain. The Boulogne flotilla was in great part rotten ; it was no longer possible to transport one hundred and fifty thousand men in twenty-four hours across the Channel. But the Emperor's plans were modified by that circumstance, not abandoned. He now proposed to embark sixty thousand only at Boulogne, and thirty thousand in Holland ; and the maritime war was to be converted into one incessantly menacing England or its colonies with considerable fleets. An expedition against Sicily, and great preparations in the Ionian islands, formed part of these designs ; and orders were sent out to all the harbours of the empire to make preparations for this new species of hostility.¹

¹Thiers, viii.
27, 33.
Montg. vi.
288, 299,
315.

But all the other consequences of the peace at Tilsit were trifling in comparison with those which took place in the Spanish peninsula. As the war to which they led in that quarter, however, was by far the most important and eventful which arose out of the French Revolution ; brought, for the first time, the English and French armies into collision as principals in the contest ; and was the chief cause of the overthrow of Napoleon, as well as the best index to the leading features of his policy, it requires for its elucidation a separate chapter.

In the consequences, however, which have already been described as flowing from the treaty of Tilsit, is to be discerned the clearest indications of the great peril which instantly threatens the cause of European independence from the undue preponderance acquired by any of its potentates, and of the absolute necessity which exists for the maintenance of that balance of power in which super-

54.
Reflections
on the im-
minent
hazard to
Europe from
the treaty
of Tilsit.

* " Ces mesures tiennent à un ensemble de projets que vous ne pouvez pas connaître. Sachez seulement que, dans l'état du monde, la perte de Corfou serait le plus grand malheur qui pût arriver à l'empire."—NAPOLEON to MARMONT, 24th August 1807 ; THIERS, viii. 33.

ficial observers have so often seen only the prolific source of unnecessary warfare. The principle on which that policy is founded is that of *obsta principiis*: resist the encroachments which may give any one state an undue preponderance; and regard such contests at the extremity of the outworks as the only effectual means of defending the ramparts of the place. Such a system requires a sacrifice of the present to the future; it involves an immediate expenditure to avert a remote, and possibly contingent evil. It will, therefore, always be supported only by the wise, and be generally unpopular with the bulk of mankind. It is of great importance, therefore, to attend to the consequences which immediately resulted from the treaty at Tilsit, and the effects which necessarily ensued from the overthrow of this system. The inferior powers of Europe were then overawed or subdued. England had withdrawn almost entirely from the strife; and, secluded in her inaccessible isle, had remained, according to the favourite system of a numerous class of her politicians, a neutral spectator of the wars of the Continent. What was the consequence? Was it that her independence was better secured, her interests more thoroughly established, or her ultimate safety better provided for, than under the more active and costly system of former times? On the contrary, while the rights and liberties of the Continental states were utterly destroyed for the time, during her secession, England herself was brought to the very edge of perdition. The European strife immediately ran into a contest between its two great powers: the whole moral as well as physical strength of the Continent was arrayed under the banners of France and Russia; and when these rival powers came to an accommodation, it was by the mutual agreement to divide between them the spoils of all subordinate or neutral states.¹

¹Thiers, viii.
233, 235.

To Russia, already enriched by a portion of Prussia, was assigned Finland, the greater part of Turkey, and an

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55.

Universal
empire was
now openly
aimed at by
Russia and
France.

irresistible preponderance in the Euxine and Baltic seas; to France, already master of the half of Germany, was allotted Italy, Poland, and the Spanish peninsula, with a promise of obtaining Greece, Macedonia, and the islands of the Archipelago. It was Napoleon himself who proposed this vast scheme of spoliation to Alexander; the ambition of the Czar, great as it was, had never contemplated anything so extensive.* He now openly showed his determination to dethrone all sovereigns who did not instantly adhere to his designs against Great Britain, and replace them by others drawn from his family, who might be expected to be obedient to his will. France and Russia, relying on each other's support, now laid aside all moderation, and even the semblance of justice, in their proceedings; and, strong in their mutual forbearance, instantly proceeded to appropriate, without scruple, the possessions of all other states, even unoffending neutrals or faithful allies, which lay on their own side of the line of demarcation. It was easy to see that the present concord which subsisted between them could not last. The world was not wide enough for two such great and ambitious powers, any more than it had been for Alexander and Darius, Rome and Carthage. Universal empire to one or other would, it was likely, be the result of a desperate strife between them, and in that case it would be hard to say whether the independence of Great Britain had most to fear from the Scythian or the Gallic hosts. Already this danger had become apparent: all the fleets of Europe were combined under the command of the French Emperor; and in a few years he would have two hundred sail of the line to beat down in the Channel the naval forces of England, and carry slavery and ruin into the British dominions.¹ Such were, then,

¹ Thiers, viii.
243. Bign.
vii. 43, 44.

* “‘Je ne pensais pas,’ dit Alexandre au Général Savary, ‘aux provinces du Danube; c’est votre Empereur qui, en recevant la nouvelle de la chute de Selim, s’est écrié à Tilsit: On ne peut rien faire avec ces barbares! la Providence me dégage envers eux; arrangeons-nous à leurs dépens!’”—THIERS, *Consulat et l’Empire*, viii. 219.

the consequences of the subversion of the balance of power ; such the dangers which induce the far-seeing sagacity of political wisdom to commence the conflict for national independence as soon as the rights of inferior powers are menaced.

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Although, however, both the liberties of England and independence of Europe were at this time placed in such imminent peril, yet a great step had already been made towards diminishing the danger. The Copenhagen expedition had completely paralysed the right wing of the naval force by which Napoleon expected to effect our subjugation. The capture of twenty ships of the line and fifteen frigates, with all their stores complete, equivalent, in Napoleon's estimation, to the destruction of eighty thousand land troops, was perhaps the greatest maritime blow ever yet struck by any nation, and weakened the naval resources of the French Emperor to a degree greater in extent than any single calamity, except Trafalgar, yet experienced during the war. The hostility of Russia, predetermined at Tilsit, was by this stroke kept almost within the bounds of compulsory neutrality. Sweden was encouraged to continue in the English alliance ; the maritime force of the Baltic was in a manner withdrawn from the contest ; a few sail of the line were all that were required to be maintained by England in that quarter. It is remarkable that this great achievement, fraught with such momentous consequences at that eventful crisis, was regarded by the nation at the time with divided and uneasy sentiments ; and that the Opposition never had so largely the support of the public as when they assailed the government on account of a measure calculated, in its ultimate results, to prove the salvation of the country. But it is not to be supposed that this dissatisfaction was owing to factious motives ; on the contrary, it was brought about by the ascendancy in the public mind of the best and noblest principles of our nature. And it is a memorable circumstance, highly characteristic of the salutary

56.
Great importance of the stroke already struck at Napoleon's naval confederacy.

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influence of public opinion under a really free government, in bringing the actions of public men to the test of general morality, that while in France, where revolutionary ascendancy had extinguished every feeling in regard to public matters, except the admiration of success, and in Russia, where a despotic sway had hitherto prevented the growth of any public opinion whatever, universal satisfaction ensued at the ill-gotten gains of the respective Emperors, the English people mourned at the greatest maritime conquest yet achieved by their arms ; and disdained to purchase even national independence at the expense, as it was then in error supposed, of the national faith.

CHAPTER LII.

PROXIMATE CAUSES OF THE PENINSULAR WAR.

No sooner had Napoleon returned to Paris, than he began to turn his eyes towards the Spanish peninsula, and the means of bringing the resources of its monarchies more immediately under the control of France than they had hitherto been brought, even by the abject submission of both courts to his commands. His designs against Portugal had been of very long standing. Lord Yarmouth had gained a clue to them while conducting the negotiations at Paris in July 1806, for the conclusion of a general peace; and so pressing did the danger at that time appear, that government despatched Earl St Vincent with a powerful squadron to the Tagus, to watch over British interests in that quarter, and afford to the Portuguese government every assistance in his power in warding off the danger with which they were threatened. Lord Rosslyn accompanied the expedition in a political character, and was authorised to offer the cabinet of Lisbon assistance in men and money, to aid them in repelling the threatened invasion. Nor were these measures of precaution uncalled for: a corps of thirty thousand men, under the name of the "army of the Gironde," was assembling at Bayonne, commanded by Junot; and it was ascertained, by undoubted information, that their destina-

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1.

Ambitious
views of
Napoleon
with refer-
ence to the
Spanish
Peninsula.
His design
on Portugal.

July 1806.

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¹ Hard. x.
79. Parl.
Deb. viii.
134.

tion was Lisbon.* The presence of the British fleet, under Earl St Vincent, in the Tagus for a period of several months, revived the drooping spirits of the Portuguese government; but after the battle of Jena, their terror of France so far prevailed as to induce them to solicit the removal of that squadron. The march, however, of the French armies to Prussia, postponed, for a considerable period at least, the threatened invasion.¹†

²
And against
Spain.Treaty, 19th
July 1806.² *Ante*, ch.
xlii. § 79.

At the same period when these preparations, avowedly directed against Portugal, were going forward on the Pyrenean frontier, the cabinet of Madrid discovered, through their ambassador at Paris, that Napoleon was offering to bestow on others, without their knowledge or consent, considerable portions of the Spanish dominions. It has been already noticed that, in his anxiety for peace with England, he offered to cede the Spanish settlement of Puerto Rico; and, to obtain Sicily from the British government for his brother Joseph, he proposed to give up the Balearic Isles as a compensation to the dispossessed family of Naples.² Even this was not all. To make up the amount of indemnity, it was seriously proposed that a large annuity, imposed as a burden for ever on the Spanish crown, should be settled on the dislodged family, and stipulations to this effect were inserted in the secret articles of the treaty which M. d'Oubril signed with

* "Switzerland," said Talleyrand to Lord Yarmouth at Paris, on 27th July 1806, "is on the eve of undergoing a great change. This cannot be averted but by a peace with England; but still less can we alter for any other consideration our intention of invading Portugal. The army destined for that purpose is already assembled at Bayonne. This is for the consideration of Great Britain." —LORD YARMOUTH'S *Despatch*, July 30, 1806; *Parl. Deb.* viii. 134.

† Even so early as this period, the project of partitioning Portugal, and conferring a portion of it on the Prince of the Peace, afterwards embodied in the treaty of Fontainebleau, was formed. "Lord Rosslyn," says General Foy, "was no sooner admitted to the council of Lisbon than he announced that it was all over with Portugal; that a French army, assembled at the foot of the Pyrenees, was ready to invade it, and that its conquest was already arranged between the King of Spain and the Prince of the Peace. 'That great project,' added he, 'has been confided by Talleyrand to Lord Lauderdale during the negotiations at Paris. The ministers of the King of England could not see without uneasiness the peril of their ancient allies; they have flown to their succour. A

France on July 19, 1806.* Nor were these diplomatic arrangements unsupported by warlike demonstrations. On the contrary, the most active measures were taken to put the army on the Pyrenean frontier on the most efficient footing; and on the 19th July Earl Yarmouth wrote to Mr Secretary Fox—"There is a considerable army already forming at Bayonne; thirty thousand men are there already: this army is ostensibly directed against Portugal, *but it will take Spain also.*"¹

The alarming discovery of the manner in which the French Emperor was thus disposing of portions of the Spanish dominions—a state with which he was in close alliance at the time—without even going through the form of asking their consent to the cessions they were required to make, added to the irritation which the Spanish government already felt at the dethronement of the Neapolitan branch of the house of Bourbon. It produced the same impression on the cabinet of Madrid that a similar discovery, made at the same time, of the offer of Napoleon to cede Hanover, recently bestowed on Prussia by himself, to Great Britain, as an inducement to that power to enter into a maritime peace, did on that of Berlin. Both these powers had for ten years cordially supported France: Spain, in particular, had placed her fleets and treasures at its disposal; and not only annually

CHAP.
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1807.
1 Torenó, i.
6. Bign. v.
345, 352.
Lord Yarmouth's
Despatch,
Paris, July
19, 1806.
Parl. Deb.
viii. 122.

3.
The discovery of these
designs
rouses Spain
against
France.

corps of 12,000 men is at this moment embarking at Portsmouth, and will shortly arrive at Lisbon; meanwhile, the court of Lisbon may draw at pleasure on the treasury of England for the charges consequent on the war."—FOY, ii. 123. The English expedition sailed, but afterwards went on to Sicily, as the Portuguese government, relieved of their present danger by the Prussian war, and desirous not to embroil themselves further with France, not only declined their aid, but prevailed on the English government to withdraw their squadron from the Tagus.

* "M. d'Oubril and Talleyrand have fixed upon Majorca, Minorca, and Iviça for his Sicilian Majesty, if they cannot prevail on us to evacuate Sicily."—LORD YARMOUTH to Mr SECRETARY FOX, July 19 and 20, 1806; *Parl. Deb.* viii. 122. And again, on the 26th September, Champagny proposed to Lord Lauderdale "that his Sicilian Majesty should have the Balearic Isles, and an annuity from the court of Spain to enable him to maintain his dignity."—LORD LAUDERDALE'S Despatch to EARL SPENCER, Paris, 26th September 1806; *Parl. Deb.* viii. 193, 194.

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paid an enormous tribute (£2,800,000) towards the expenses of the war, but submitted for its prosecution to the destruction of her marine, and the entire stoppage of her foreign and colonial trade. When, therefore, in return for so many sacrifices, made in a cause foreign to the real interests of their country, her ministers found not only that the interests of the Peninsula were noways regarded by Napoleon in his negotiations with England and Russia, but that he had actually offered the dismemberment of the Spanish monarchy, his tried and faithful ally, to appease the jealousy and satisfy the demands of these his old and inveterate enemies, their indignation knew no bounds.¹

¹ Hard. x.
80, 81. To-
reno, i. 6,
7. Bign.
vii. 43.

4.
Extreme
irritation
produced
at Madrid.

The veil which had so long hung before their eyes was at once violently rent asunder; they saw clearly that fidelity in alliance, and long-continued national support, afforded no guarantee whatever for the continued support of the French monarch; and that, when it suited his purpose, he had no scruples in purchasing a temporary respite from the hostility of an enemy by the permanent spoliation of a friend. The Prince of the Peace also was personally mortified at the exclusion of the Spanish minister at Paris from all share in the conferences going on with d'Oubril and Lord Yarmouth for the conclusion of a general peace. Under the influence of such pressing public and private causes of irritation, the Spanish minister lent a willing ear to the advances of the Russian ambassador at Madrid, Baron Strogonoff, who strongly represented the impolicy of continuing any longer the alliance with a conqueror who sacrificed his allies to propitiate his enemies; and a convention was secretly concluded at Madrid between the Spanish government and the Russian ambassador, to which the court of Lisbon was also a party, by which it was agreed, that as soon as the favourable opportunity arrived, by the French armies being far advanced on their road to Berlin, the Spanish government should commence hostilities on the Pyrenees,² and

Aug. 28,
1806.
² Lord Lond-
derry, i.
19. Hard.
x. 80, 81.
Toreno, i.
6, 7.

invite the English cabinet to co-operate in averting the dangers with which it was menaced from the Spanish peninsula.*

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1807.

The whole of this secret negotiation was made known to Napoleon through the activity of his ambassador at Madrid, and by the intercepting of some of the correspondence in cipher in which it was carried on, before the Prussian war was commenced. But he dissembled his resentment, and resolved to strike a decisive blow in the north of Germany, before he carried into effect the views which he now began to entertain for the total conquest and appropriation of both kingdoms in the Peninsula. The imprudence of the Prince of the Peace, however, publicly revealed the designs which were in agitation before the proper season had arrived; for, in a proclamation published in the beginning of October at Madrid, he invited "all Spaniards to unite themselves under the national standards; the rich to make sacrifices for the charges of a war which will soon be called for by the common good; the magistrates to do all in their power to rouse the public enthusiasm, in order to enable the nation to enter with glory in the lists which were preparing." This proclamation reached Napoleon on the field of Jena, the evening after the battle.

5.
Premature
proclama-
tion by the
Prince of
Peace.

Oct. 5, 1806.

He was not prepared for so vigorous a step on the part of one who had so long been the obsequious minister of his will; and it may be conceived what his feelings were on receiving accounts of so decided a demonstration in a moment of unexampled triumph.¹

¹ Hard. x.
79, 81. De
Pradt, Sur
la Rév.
d'Espagne,
15. South.
i. 83.

Too skilled in dissembling, however, to give any premature vent to his feelings, he contented himself with instructing his ambassador at Madrid to demand an expla-

* M. Bignon says (vii. 197) that the preparations of Spain were not owing to this hostile step of Napoleon appropriating the Balearic Isles, because they began in August 1806, at which time the treaty of July 19, by which it was stipulated, could not have been known. But that defence of Napoleon is entirely overthrown by the simple fact that that treaty was known and communicated to the British government on the very day (July 19, 1806) on which it was signed.—See *ante*, Chap. LII. § 2, note.

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1807.

6.

Profound
dissimula-
tion and
address of
Napoleon
regarding
it.

nation of so extraordinary a measure, and feigned entire satisfaction with the flimsy pretence that it was directed against an anticipated descent of the Moors. Nay, he had the address to render this perilous step the means of forwarding his ultimate designs against the Peninsula: for, by threatening the Prince of the Peace with the utmost consequences of his resentment, if the most unequivocal proofs of devotion to the cause of France were not speedily given, he succeeded in obtaining the consent of the cabinet of Madrid to the march of the Marquis Romana, with the flower of the Spanish army, from the banks of the Ebro to the shores of the Baltic; thereby denuding the Peninsula of its best defenders, and leaving it, as he supposed, an easy prey to his ambitious designs.* At the same time the court of Lisbon, justly alarmed at the perilous situation in which they were placed by this ill-timed revelation of their secret designs, lost no time in disavowing all participation in a project which all concerned pretended now equally to condemn; and, to propitiate the conqueror by an act which they were well aware would be well received, compelled Earl St Vincent to withdraw with his squadron from the Tagus.¹

¹ Hard. x.
79, 81.
Southey's
Pen. War,
i. 83. De
Pradt, Sur
la Rev.
d'Espagne,
15. London-
derry, i. 21,
22.

7.

Napoleon re-
solves on the
dethrone-
ment of the
Spanish and
Portuguese
monarchs.

This meditated though abortive resistance of Spain, however, to the projects of spoliation which he had in contemplation, produced a very great impression on Napoleon. He perceived, in the clearest manner, the risk to which he was exposed, if, while actively engaged in a German or Russian war in front, he were to be suddenly assailed by the monarchies of the Peninsula in rear; a quarter where the French frontier was in a great measure defenceless, and from which the armies of England might find an easy entrance into the heart of his

* The details now given on the spoliation of Spain, which had been contemplated by Napoleon in the diplomatic conferences with the English government at Paris in July 1806, and the actual conclusion of a treaty for that spoliation with Russia in that month, are of the highest importance in the development of the remote causes of the Peninsular war, as they demonstrate that the well-known proclamation of the Prince of the Peace on the 5th October was not, as the French panegyrists of Napoleon represent, an un-

dominions. He felt with Louis XIV. that it was necessary there should be no longer any Pyrenees ; and as the Revolution had altered the reigning family on the throne of France, it appeared indispensable that a similar change should take place in the Peninsular monarchies. By effecting that object, he thought, apparently with reason, that not only would the resources of the kingdoms it contained be more completely placed at his disposal, but his rear would be secured by the co-operation of princes whose existence depended on the maintenance of his authority ; and a new Family Compact, founded on the same reasons of blood connexion and state policy which had rendered it so important to the Bourbon, would, in like manner, secure the perpetuity of the Napoleon dynasty. From the people, either of Spain or Portugal, he anticipated little or no opposition, deeming them, like the Italians, indifferent to political changes, provided that no diminution were made in their private enjoyments. Although, therefore, he dissembled his intentions as long as the war continued in the north of Europe, he had already taken his resolution, and the determination was irrevocable, that the houses of Bourbon and Braganza should cease to reign. The arch-chancellor Cambacérès, being opposed to this project, was not taken into confidence on the subject ; but Talleyrand warmly supported it to the extent, at least, of incorporating the whole of the Spanish provinces to the north of the Ebro with the French empire.¹

The peace of Tilsit, however, placed Napoleon in a very different situation, and gave him at once the means of securing in the most effectual manner the concurrence of Alexander in the dethronement of the Peninsular

CHAP.
LII.

1807.

¹ Las Cas.
iv. 200, 201.
Londond. i.
22. Hard.
x. 81, 82.
Thib. vi.
276. Thiers,
viii. 253,
257.

called for act of original hostility on the part of the Spanish government, but a *defensive measure* merely, rendered necessary by the discovery of Napoleon's *previous* declared intention of bestowing on strangers, without the consent of the government, considerable portions of the Spanish dominions. This important fact, demonstrated beyond dispute by the state-papers above quoted, appears to be entirely unknown to Southey, (*Penins. War*, i. 83.) Napier, (*Penins. War*, i. 4.) and even to Lord Londonderry, (*Londond. i.* 21, 23.)

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LII.

1807.

8.
Measures
arranged
at Tilsit
against
Spain and
Portugal.
¹ *Ante*, ch.
xlv. § 80.

Aug. 12.

monarchs, by simply conniving at his advances against the Turkish empire. It has already been stated, accordingly, that the invasion of Spain was settled at this period, and that the consideration given for that act of injustice, was permission to the Czar to drive the Turks out of Europe.^{1*} In regard to Portugal, the course to be adopted was sufficiently plain. All that was required was to summon the court of Lisbon to shut their ports against England, confiscate all English property within their dominions, and declare war against the British empire. In the course of enforcing such a requisition, it was hoped that an opportunity could hardly fail to present itself of effecting the total dethronement of the house of Braganza. This was accordingly done: and on the 12th August the Portuguese government, as already noticed, were formally summoned, in terms of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, to declare war against England, adopt the Continental System, and confiscate all the English property within their bounds.† This requisition was made in the most menacing and peremptory style,

Proofs of
secret confer-
ences regard-
ing them.

* "I have strong reasons to believe," says Savary, "that the affair of Spain was arranged at Tilsit. Subsequently, at St Petersburg, when the troubles in the Peninsula commenced, the Emperor seemed noways surprised at them, and not only expressed no jealousy at the entrance of the French troops into Spain, but never once mentioned the subject. And though Napoleon wrote to me every week from Paris, he never alluded to the subject; a silence which he certainly would not have preserved had everything not been previously arranged, especially considering how much he had at heart, at that period, to draw closer the bonds of the Russian alliance."—SAVARY, iii. 90; see also THIBAudeau, *Hist. de l'Empire*, vi. 276; ABBÉ DE PRADT, *Révolution d'Espagne*, i. 7; and Escoiquiz has preserved a remarkable conversation which he had with Napoleon himself on the subject.—"There is but one power," said he, "which can disturb my views, and I have no fears in that quarter. *The Emperor of Russia, to whom I communicated my projects on Spain, which were formed at that period, approved of them, and gave me his word of honour that he would throw no obstacles in their way.* The other powers will remain tranquil, and the resistance of the Spaniards will not be formidable. Believe me, the countries where monks have influence are not difficult to conquer."—ESCOQUIZ, 131; *Pièces Just.*

† The note presented by the French ambassador at Lisbon to the Portuguese government was in these terms;—"The undersigned has received orders to declare, that if, on the 1st of next September, the Prince Regent of Portugal has not manifested his resolution to emancipate himself from English influence, by declaring without delay war against Great Britain, dismissing the English

accompanied with the intimation that, if instant compliance was not made, the Spanish forces would be united to the French, and Portugal would forthwith be occupied not for ten or fifteen days, as in 1801, but for the whole war, perhaps for ever, according to circumstances. At the same time, the army of the Gironde, which had been in a great measure broken up during the Prussian war, was re-assembled at Bayonne, and, before the end of August, Junot found himself there at the head of twenty-five thousand foot and three thousand horse; while Napoleon, in anticipation of an unfavourable reply to his demands, without waiting for an answer, at once seized the Portuguese ships in his harbours. His mind was now definitively made up to appropriate Portugal, and render that acquisition the means of revolutionising Spain, and chasing the Bourbons from their tottering throne.¹*

CHAP.
LII.

1807.

Aug. 29.
1 Thib. vi.
277. Ann.
Reg. 1807,
279, 280.
Lond. i. 24,
25. South.
i. 90. Hard.
x. 99, 100,
Parl. Deb.
345. Lord
Wellesley's
Statements.
Thiers, viii.
23, 243.

The British cabinet, who were speedily informed of the demand thus made upon their ancient ally, and were no strangers either to the powerful means at the disposal of the French Emperor for enforcing obedience to his

ambassador, recalling his own from London, confiscating all the English merchandise, closing his harbours against the English vessels, and uniting his squadrons to the navies of the Continental powers, the Prince Regent of Portugal will be considered as having renounced the cause of the Continent, and the undersigned will be under the necessity of demanding his passports, and declaring war."—12th August 1807.—Foy's *Pen. War*, ii. 405, 406; *Pièces Just.*—By a curious coincidence, this note, which so completely justified the Copenhagen expedition, was presented at Lisbon on the very day on which the British fleet approached the shores of Zealand.

* "Il voulait non pas achever, en occupant le Portugal, la clôture des rivages du Continent, mais s'approprier le Portugal lui-même pour en disposer à son gré. Il résolut de s'approprier le Portugal, sauf à s'entendre avec l'Espagne, et même à s'en servir pour révolutionner l'Espagne elle-même; car elle lui déplaisait, elle le révoltait dans son état actuel, autant que les cours de Naples et de Lisbonne, qu'il avait déjà chassées, ou qu'il allait chasser de leur trône chancelant. Tel fut le commencement des plus grandes fautes, des plus grands malheurs de son règne."—THIERS, *Consulat et l'Empire*, viii. 243, 244.

"Ayant déjà chassé de leur trône les Bourbons de Naples, il se disait souvent qu'il faudrait un jour agir de même avec les Bourbons d'Espagne, qui au fond lui étaient aussi hostiles; qui avaient essayé de le trahir la veille d'Jéna; qui ne manqueraient pas d'en saisir encore la première occasion; et qui, lorsqu'ils ne le trahissaient pas d'intention, le trahissaient de fait, en laissant périr dans leurs mains la puissance Espagnole, puissance aussi nécessaire à la France qu'à l'Espagne elle-même."—*Ibid.* viii. 245.

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LII.

1807.

9.

Measures of
the Portu-
guese gov-
ernment,
and origin
of the Span-
ish intrigues.
Aug. 18.

Sept. 16.

Oct. 10.

Oct. 17.

Oct. 19.

wishes, or the inconsiderable force which the Portuguese government could oppose to his hostility, immediately sent the generous intimation to the court of Lisbon, that they would consent to anything which might appear conducive to the safety of Portugal, and only hoped that the threatened confiscation of British property would not be complied with. The Prince Regent in consequence agreed to shut his harbours against English vessels, and to declare war against Great Britain; but he declared that his sense of religion, and the regard which he entertained for existing treaties, would not permit him to confiscate at once the property of the English merchants. Intimation was at the same time sent to the British residents that they had better wind up their affairs and embark their property as speedily as possible. This modified compliance with his demands, however, was far from satisfying the French Emperor, to whom the confiscation of English property was as convenient as a means of gratifying his followers by plunder, as it was essential to the general adoption of the Continental System, which he had so much at heart. Orders, therefore, were immediately despatched to Junot to commence his march; they reached the French general on the 17th October; two days afterwards, his leading divisions CROSSED THE *BIDASSOA*; while the court of Lisbon, menaced with instant destruction, soon after issued a decree, excluding English vessels of every description from their harbours, but declaring that, if the French troops entered Portugal, they would retire with their fleet to the Brazils. Events, however, succeeded one another with extraordinary rapidity; and, without any regard to the obedience yielded by the court of Lisbon to his demands by the proclamation of the 20th October, Napoleon had not only already resolved on the total destruction of the house of Braganza, but actually concluded a treaty for the entire partition of its dominions.¹ The motives which led to this act of spoliation are intimately connected with the complicated

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 280.
Lond. i. 27,
28. Hard,
x. 103, 104.
Thib. Hist.
del'Empire,
vi. 260, 261.

intrigues which at this period were preparing the way for the dethronement of the Spanish house of Bourbon, and the lighting up the flames of the PENINSULAR WAR.

The views of Napoleon on the Spanish Peninsula, first formed in the summer of 1806, and matured with the consent of Alexander at Tilsit, required even more the aid of skilful and unscrupulous diplomatists than of powerful armies towards their development. He found such aid in Talleyrand and Duroc, the only ones of his confidential counsellors who at this period were initiated in his hidden designs, and from the former of whom he received every encouragement for their prosecution;* while his acute ambassador at Madrid, Beauharnais, transmitted all the information requisite to enable him to appreciate the disposition of the leading political characters with whom he was likely, in carrying them into execution, to come into collision. The Spanish royal family at this period was divided and distracted by intrigue to a degree almost unprecedented even in the dark annals of Italian or Byzantine faction. The King, Charles IV., though a prince not destitute of good qualities, fond of literature and the fine arts, endowed with no inconsiderable share of political penetration, and obstinately resolute, when fairly roused, in the maintenance of his own opinions, was nevertheless so extremely indolent, and so desirous of enjoying on a throne the tranquillity of private life, that he surrendered himself on ordinary occasions without scruple to the direction of the Queen and the Prince of the Peace. She was a woman of spirit and capacity, but sensual, intriguing, and almost entirely governed by Don Manuel Godoy, a minister whom her criminal favour had

CHAP.
LII.
1807.

10.
Character of
the leading
persons
there: the
Prince of
the Peace,
Charles IV.,
the Queen.

* Talleyrand and his partisans have taken advantage of his dismissal from the office of minister for foreign affairs shortly after this period, to represent him as hostile to the war with Spain. There can be no doubt, however, from his communications to Savary at Tilsit, that he was then privy to that design, and approved of it;¹ and Napoleon constantly asserted that it was he who originally suggested to him the subjugation of the Peninsula. "Napoleon declared," says O'Meara, "that Talleyrand was the first to suggest to him the invasion of Spain."—O'MEARA, ii. 330; See also THIBAudeau, vi. 296.

¹ *Ante*, chap. xlv., § 80.

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raised from the humblest station to be the supreme director of affairs in the Peninsula. Godoy was not by nature a bad man; and, being endowed with considerable talents, might, under a free constitution, and in a country where greatness was to be attained by integrity of conduct and capacity for the direction of affairs, have preserved an unblemished reputation. Even as it was, his administration, among many grievous evils, conferred some important benefits on his country. But, elevated to power by the partiality of a woman, ambitious, vain, and ostentatious, surrounded by a jealous nobility, who regarded his extraordinary influence with undisguised aversion, he had no resource for the preservation of his power but in the same arts to which he had owed his rise. He had the extraordinary faculty, descriptive not less of his own character than of the manners of the court where his elevation had taken place, while married to a princess of the blood-royal, to carry on a ceaseless intrigue with the Queen, and, without exciting her jealousy, to live in open adultery with Mademoiselle Tudo, by whom he had several children, and console himself, when her charms began to wane, with those of her younger and more beautiful sister! Alike unsatiated by this power, and undeterred by these scandals, which were known to all Spain, he now openly aspired to a throne, and aimed at the formation of a dynasty which might take its place among the crowned heads of Europe.*

Sketch of
the life of
the Prince of
the Peace.

* Don Manuel Godoy, born at Badajos in 1767, of a noble but obscure family, affords as singular an example of sudden elevation as the history of Europe or the East has recorded. A mere private in the body-guard, he owed the first favour of the Queen to the skill with which he sang and touched the lute, so favourite an instrument in that land of love and romance. Rapidly advanced by the royal favour in that dissolute court, he had the singular art, from 1793, not merely to lead captive his royal mistress, but to acquire an unlimited sway over the mind of the King, and at the same time live publicly with another mistress, (Donna Pepa Tudo,) by whom he had several children. His education had been neglected, but he had considerable natural talents, which appeared in an especial manner in the numerous and successful intrigues which he carried on with the ladies of the court, whose rivalry for his favours increased with every additional title he acquired. He was not, however, naturally bad, and never disgraced his administration by acts of cruelty. In five years he rose from being a private in the Guards to absolute power, and was

Charles IV., too weak to divine the ambitious designs of the ruling favourite, and entirely under his direction, was not only blind to the infamy the Prince of the Peace was bringing on his house, but insensible to the dangers which it ran from his ambition. He created him Grand-Admiral of Spain, and gave him the entire command of the whole forces, naval and military, of his dominions. The Royal Guard, of which he was commander, was commanded by his creatures; the royal treasures were at his disposal. Thus encouraged, Godoy began to entertain the most extravagant projects, and had already sounded the leading members of the councils of Castile and the Indies, and the parliament of Spain, on the possibility of changing the order of succession to the throne, and securing the regency, if not the crown, to himself.¹

CHAP.
LII.
1807.

¹ Hard. x.
85, 87. Thib.
vi. 277, 278.
Toreno, i. 9,
12. Nell. i.
3, 4. Thiers,
viii. 277,
278.

The Prince of Asturias, afterwards so well known in Europe under the title of Ferdinand VII., was born on the 14th October 1784; and was consequently twenty-four years of age when the troubles of Spain commenced. Facile and indolent in general, though at the same time irascible and impetuous on particular occasions, he had fallen entirely under the guidance of those by whom he was surrounded. They were all creatures of the Prince of the Peace,—with the exception of the virtuous Count Alvarez, whose principles were too unbending to allow him to remain long in the corrupted atmosphere of a

11.
The Prince
of Asturias,
and Escoi-
quiz, his
confidential
adviser.

already loaded with honours and titles before the treaty of Bale, in 1795, which procured for him the title of Prince of the Peace. From that time, down to the period of the French invasion, his ascendant at court was unbroken, and his influence over both the King and Queen unbounded. At the special desire of the King, he at length espoused the daughter of Don Louis, brother of that monarch; and his daughter was destined in marriage to the young King of Etruria. He had all the passion for show and splendour which usually belongs to those who are elevated to a rank which they have not held from their infancy: this prodigality occasioned a perpetual want of money, which was supplied by the sale of offices and the receipt of bribes of every description; and under his administration a frightful system of corruption overspread every branch of the public service. Many public improvements, however, also signalised it. The impulse given by the Bourbons to the sciences and arts was continued and increased; greater benefits were conferred on public industry during the fifteen years of his government than during the three preceding

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despotic court; and the Canon Escoiquiz, an ecclesiastic of remarkable talents, extensive knowledge, and profound dissimulation, who, by his capacity and zeal in his service, had at length acquired the absolute direction of his affairs. The Prince of Asturias had been early married to a princess of the Neapolitan house of Bourbon, whose talents, high spirit, and jealousy of the exorbitant influence of Godoy, had fomented the divisions almost inseparable from the relative situations of heir-apparent and ruling monarch in an absolute government. Two parties, as usual on such occasions, formed themselves at the Spanish court; the one paying their court to the ruling power, the other worshipping the rising sun. The Prince of the Peace was the object of universal idolatry to the former, Escoiquiz was the soul of the latter. The Princess of Asturias, after four years of a brilliant existence, died, universally regretted, in May 1806, leaving the Spanish monarchy, at the approaching crisis of its fate, exposed, in addition to the divisions of a distracted court, to the intrigues consequent on the competition for the hand of the heir-apparent to the throne.¹

May 21,
1806.

¹ Hard. x.
88, 89. Thib.
vi. 277, 278.
Cevallos,
12, 13.

12.
Escoiquiz
opens a
negotiation
with the
French am-
bassador,
and the
Prince of
Asturias
writes to
Napoleon.

Godoy saw the advantage which his future rival was likely to derive from his ascendant over the mind of Ferdinand, and therefore he had long before taken the decisive step of exiling him from Madrid to the place of his ecclesiastical preferment at Toledo. He afterwards adopted the design of extending the influence he held over the reigning monarch to the heir-apparent, by marrying him to Donna Maria Louisa de Bourbon, sister

reigns. Schools were established for the encouragement of agriculture, the spread of medical information, and the diffusion of knowledge in the mechanical arts. He braved the Inquisition, and snatched more than one victim from its jaws. He arrested the alienation of estates held by mortmain, which threatened to swallow up half the land of the kingdom. But he was unfit for the guidance of the state in the trying periods of the revolutionary wars; and drew on Spain the contempt of foreign powers by the subservience and degradation of his foreign administration.—See Godoy's *Mem.* i. 1, 217; and For, ii. 250, 262.

of his own wife; and even went so far as to propose that alliance to the Prince. This project, however, miscarried, and Godoy again returned to his ambitious designs, independent of the heir-apparent, who resumed his relations with Escoiquiz and the malcontent party among the nobility. No sooner, therefore, did Napoleon turn his eyes towards Spain in spring 1807, than he opened secret negotiations with him; while, at the same time, Escoiquiz, who, though banished to Toledo, was still the soul of the Prince's party, commenced underhand intrigues in the same quarter, and came privately to Madrid to arrange with the Duke del Infantado, the Duke de San Carlos, and the other leaders of the Prince's party, the means of permanently emancipating him from the thralldom of the ruling favourite. It was in order to foment and take advantage of these divisions that Napoleon sent Beauharnais as his ambassador to Madrid in July 1807; and that skilful diplomatist was not long of opening secret conferences with the Duke del Infantado, in which it was mutually agreed that, both for the security of the Spanish monarchy, and to form a counterpoise to the enormous power and ambitious projects of the Prince of the Peace, it was indispensable that the Prince of Asturias should espouse a princess of the imperial family of Buonaparte. There was no difficulty in coming to an understanding, and establishing a secret and clandestine correspondence between the Prince of Asturias and the French ambassador; for he and all his advisers were in the utmost alarm at the ambitious projects of the Prince of the Peace; and although Beauharnais was sent by Napoleon to conduct the intrigue, it is quite certain that the first proposals for the marriage came from the counsellors of the Prince.¹* Beauharnais,

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¹ Thib. vi.
280, 282.
Tor. i. 12.
13. Hard.
x. 89, 90.
Ceval. 13.
Moniteur,
Feb. 5, 1810.
Thiers, viii.
290, 294.

* "Vous me permettez, monsieur l'ambassadeur, de vous exprimer toute ma reconnaissance pour les preuves d'estime et d'affection que vous m'avez données dans la correspondance secrète et indirecte que nous avons eue jusqu'à présent par le moyen de la personne que vous savez, qui a toute ma confiance. Je dois enfin à vos bontés ce que je n'oublierai jamais, le bonheur de pouvoir

CHAP. LII. on finding the dispositions thus mutual, soon wrote to Escoiquiz, calling on him to "give a specific guarantee, and something more than vague promises, on the subject." 1807. Thus encouraged, the Prince of Asturias wrote directly Sept. 30. to Napoleon a letter, in which, after the most exaggerated flattery, and a declaration that his father was surrounded by evil counsellors, who misled his better judgment, he implored him to permit him the honour of an alliance with his imperial family.*

Oct. 10. Beauharnais had warmly entered into these views of the Prince of Asturias, in the hope that, if the proposed alliance took place, the choice of the prince would be directed to a niece of the Empress, and relation of his own, who was afterwards bestowed on the Duke d'Aremberg. But when the letter reached Napoleon, he had other views for the disposal of the Spanish throne. By means of Isquierdo, a Spanish agent at Paris, who was a mere creature of the Prince of the Peace, he had for some time been negotiating a treaty with Charles IV., the object of which was at once to secure the partition of Portugal, and bestow such a share of its spoils on Godoy as might secure him to the French interest, and prevent him from opposing any serious obstacle to the total dethronement of the Spanish royal family. This negotiation took place, and the treaty in which it terminated was signed by Isquierdo, in virtue of full powers from Charles IV., without the knowledge of the Prince of Masserano, the Spanish ambassador at Paris : ¹ a sufficient proof of the secret and sinister designs it was

13.
Treaty of
Fontaine-
bleau be-
tween Na-
poleon and
Charles IV.
Oct. 27.

¹ Dated 26th
May 1806,
and renewed
8th October
1807.

exprimer, directment et sans risque, au grand Empereur votre maître, les sentiments si longtemps retenus dans mon cœur. Je profite donc de ce moment heureux pour adresser par vos mains la lettre adjointe, à S. M. I. et R. (Napoleon.)"—PRINCE OF ASTURIAS to BEAUHARNAIS, Oct. 11, 1807; THIERS, viii. 294.

* "The world daily," said he, "more and more admired the goodness of the Emperor; and he might rest assured he would ever find in the Prince of Asturias the most faithful and devoted son. He implored, then, with the utmost confidence, the paternal protection of the Emperor, not only to permit him the honour of an alliance with his family, but that he would smooth away all diffi-

intended to serve, and of the dark, crooked policy which the Emperor Napoleon had already adopted in regard to Spanish affairs.

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By this treaty it was stipulated, that, in exchange for Tuscany, which was ceded to France, the province of Entre-Douro-e-Minho, the northern part of Portugal, comprehending the city of Oporto, should be given to the King of Etruria, with the title of King of Northern Lusitania, to revert, in default of heirs, to his Most Catholic Majesty, who, however, was not to unite it to the crown of Spain: that the provinces of Alentejo and Algarves, forming the southern part of the kingdom, should be conferred on the Prince of the Peace, with the title of Prince of Algarves; and in default of heirs-male, in like manner, and on the like conditions, revert to the crown of Spain: that the sovereigns of these two new principalities should not make war or peace without the consent of the King of Spain: that the central parts of Portugal, comprehending the provinces of Beira, Traz-oz-Montes, and Portuguese Estremadura, should remain in sequestration in the hands of the French till a general peace, to be then exchanged for Gibraltar, Trinidad, and the other Spanish colonies conquered by the English; that the sovereign of these central provinces should hold them on the same tenure and conditions as the King of Northern Lusitania: and that the Emperor Napoleon "should guarantee to his Most Catholic Majesty the possession of all his states on the continent of Europe, to the south of the Pyrenees," and concede to him the title of King of Spain and *Emperor of the Indies*, which that weak monarch was most anxious to obtain.¹

14.
Which is
ratified by
Napoleon,
29th Oct.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

¹ Thiers, vii. 259. See the treaty in Foy, ii. 406. Tor. i. 384. Martens, viii. 701.

culties, and cause all obstacles to disappear before the accomplishment of so long-cherished a wish. That effort on the part of the Emperor was the more necessary, that the Prince was incapable of making the smallest exertion on his own part, as it would infallibly be represented as an insult to the royal authority of his father: and all that he could do was to refuse, as he engaged to do with invincible constancy, any proposals for an alliance which had not the consent of the Emperor, to whom the Prince looked exclusively for the choice of his future Queen."—FERDINAND to NAPOLEON, 11th October 1807; THIBAudeau, vi. 281, 282; *Moniteur*, 5th February 1810.

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1807.

15.

Convention
of Fontaine-
bleau.
Oct. 27.

To this secret treaty of spoliation was annexed a convention, prescribing the mode in which the designs of the contracting powers should be carried into effect. By this it was agreed, that a corps of twenty-five thousand French infantry and three thousand cavalry should forthwith enter Spain and march across that country, at the charge of the court of Madrid, to Lisbon; while one Spanish corps of ten thousand men should enter the province of Entre-Douro-e-Minho, and march upon Oporto, and another of the like force take possession of Alentejo and Algarves. The contributions in the central provinces, which were to be placed in sequestration, were all to be levied for the behoof of France; those in Northern Lusitania and the principality of Algarves for that of Spain. Finally, another French corps of forty thousand men was to assemble at Bayonne by the 20th November at latest, in order to be ready to enter Portugal and support the first corps, in case the English should send troops to the assistance of Portugal or menace it with an attack; but this last corps *was on no account to enter Spain* without the consent of both the contracting parties. As the principal object of this treaty was to give France possession of Lisbon and the maritime forces of Portugal, it was communicated in substance to the Emperor of Russia, and a Russian squadron of eight ships of the line, under Admiral Siniavin, passed the Dardanelles and steered for Lisbon to support the French army, and prevent the escape of the Portuguese fleet, a short time before the army under Junot broke up from Bayonne for the Portuguese frontier, and long before any rupture had taken place between England and the cabinet of St Petersburg.^{1*}

These treaties were not merely a flagrant act of iniquity

¹ See the Convention in Foy, ii. 411, 412. Sav. iii. 145. Martens, viii. 701.

* "On reaching Lisbon," says Thiébault, "we found there eight sail of the line and a frigate, under Admiral Siniavin's order. This fleet, which, in consequence of the alliance between France and Russia, and the war of the latter with England, was to afford us an additional guarantee for the protection of the harbour, gave us in the sequel far more apprehension than security."—THIÉBAULT, *Exp. de l'Armée Franç. en Portugal*, 86, 87. The presence of the

on the part of both the contracting powers, inasmuch as they provided for the partition of a neutral and unoffending power, which had even gone so far as to yield implicit obedience, by its proclamation of the 20th October, eight days before they were signed, to all the demands of the partitioning cabinets ; but they were yet more detestable from involving a double perfidy towards the very parties who were in this manner made the instruments of the ambitious designs of the French Emperor. While Godoy was amused, and for the time secured in the French interest, by the pretended gift of a principality, his downfall had in reality been resolved on by Napoleon, who had never forgiven the proclamation of 5th October 1806 ; and this specious lure was held out without any design of really conferring it upon that powerful favourite, merely in order to remove him from the Spanish court, and make way for the great designs of the French Emperor in both parts of the Peninsula. The French force, which was stipulated to assemble at Bayonne in the end of November, was not intended to act against either the English or Portugal, but to secure the frontier fortresses of Spain for Napoleon himself ; and the Spanish forces, which were to be marched into the northern and southern provinces of Portugal, were not designed to secure any benefit for his Most Catholic Majesty, but to strip his dominions of the few regular troops which, after the departure of Romana, still remained for the defence of the monarchy, in order to prepare its subjugation for the French Emperor. So little care was taken to disguise this intention, that, by a decree soon after from Milan, Junot, the commander of the French invading force, was appointed governor of Portugal, and he was ordered to carry on the administration of the whole in the Emperor's name, which was accordingly done.* His-

Russian fleet, however, is stated by Lord Londonderry, whose means of information were far superior to those of the French military historian, to have been purely accidental.—LONDONDERRY, i. 37.

* By Junot's proclamation, dated 1st February 1808, proceeding on the

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1807.

16.

Napoleon's
perfidious
designs, both
towards
Spain and
the Prince of
the Peace, in
this treaty.

CHAP.
LII.

1807.

Dec. 26.
 1 Godoy's
 Mem. i. 55,
 Introduc-
 tion. Sav.
 iii. 246, 247.
 Hard. x. 91,
 92. Tor. i.
 19.

tory contains many examples of powerful monarchs combining iniquitously together to rob their weaker neighbours; but this is perhaps the first instance on record in which the greater of the partitioning powers, in addition to the spoliation of a neutral and unoffending state, bought the consent of its inferior coadjutors in the scheme of iniquity by the perfidious promise of some of those spoils which it destined exclusively for its own aggrandisement.¹

17.

His secret
 instructions
 to Junot in
 his invasion
 of Portugal.

It may easily be believed that, when such were the views entertained at this period by the French Emperor, the letter of the Prince of Asturias, written at the suggestion of Beauharnais, offering his hand to a princess of the imperial family, was not likely to receive a very cordial reception. It was permitted, accordingly, to remain without an answer; and meanwhile the march of Junot across the Peninsula was pressed by the most urgent orders from the imperial headquarters. Early in November, General Clarke, the minister of war, wrote, by Napoleon's command, a letter to that marshal, in which he was ordered to advance as far as Ciudad Rodrigo between the 1st to the 15th November, and to reach Lisbon at latest by the 30th. His orders were to proclaim peace to Portugal, and alliance and friendship to its prince regent; but meanwhile to press on with ceaseless activity, and at all hazards get possession of the fortresses and fleet at Lisbon, before they could be reached by the English forces.² * Junot was not backward in acting upon the

Nov. 3.

² D'Abr. xi.
 27. Hard.
 x. 97, 98.

Milan decree of 23d December 1807, it was declared—"The house of Braganza has ceased to reign in Portugal; and the Emperor Napoleon, having taken under his protection the beautiful kingdom of Portugal, wishes that it should be administered and governed *over its whole extent* in the name of his Majesty, and by the general-in-chief of his army."—See TORENO, i. 49; and FOX, iii. 343.

* He was specially ordered, "on no account to stop, whether the Prince Regent did or did not declare war against England; to move on rapidly towards the capital, receiving the proposals of the Portuguese government without returning any written answer, and to use every possible effort to arrive there as quickly as possible, *as a friend, in order to effect the seizure of the Portuguese fleet.* Should the Portuguese government have already declared war against England, you are to answer—'My instructions are to march straight on Lisbon,

perfidious policy thus prescribed to him: but in the execution of it he encountered the most serious difficulties; and such was the rapidity of his march, and the state of disorganisation to which his corps was reduced by the severity of the weather and the frightful state of the roads, that if any resistance whatever had been attempted by the Portuguese government, he must infallibly have been destroyed. At first he proceeded, by easy marches and in good order, through the north of Spain; though he everywhere underwent the utmost privations, from the entire failure of the Spanish authorities to furnish the prescribed supplies to his troops,—a failure of which the English armies in the same kingdom afterwards had such bitter experience. But when he reached Ciudad Rodrigo, the orders he received to hasten his advance and seize upon the fleet were so urgent,* that he deemed it necessary to press on with the most extraordinary expedition, and disregard everything but the one grand object in view.¹ He accordingly issued a proclamation to the inhabitants, in which he disclaimed any hostile intentions, and declared

without halting a single day; my mission is to close that great harbour against England. I would be entitled to attack you by main force, but it is repugnant to the great soul of Napoleon, and to the French character, to occasion the effusion of blood. If you make no assemblages of troops; if you dispose them so as to cause me no inquietude; if you admit no auxiliary till the negotiations set on foot at Paris are terminated, I have orders to consent to it.' This is the footing on which you *must represent matters*: you must hold out that you are arriving merely as an auxiliary; meanwhile, a courier, despatched twenty-four hours after the arrival of the main body of the army at Lisbon, will transmit the *real intentions* of the Emperor, which will be, that the proposals made are not accepted, and that the *country must be treated as a conquered territory*. It is on this principle that we have acted in Italy, where the property of all Portuguese subjects has already been put under sequestration. By proceeding in this manner, you will, without firing a shot, make yourself master of ten sail of the line and valuable arsenals; that is the *grand object*, and to attain it you *must never cease to hold out that you come not to make war but to conciliate*."² The secret instructions of Junot, written by the Emperor with his own hand, were of the same tenor:—"They enjoined Junot," says the Duchess of Abrantès, "to *do everything* in order to gain possession, not of the person of the Prince of Brazil, but of certain other persons therein named, and above all, of the city, forts, and fleet of Lisbon."—D'ABRANTÈS, xi. 27.

* "On no account halt in your march even for a day. The want of provisions could be no reason for doing so, still less the state of the roads. Twenty thousand men can march and live anywhere, even in a desert."—NAPOLEON to JUNOT, Nov. 2, 1807; TORENO, i. 35.

Nov. 17.
Nov. 19.
¹ Hard. x.
106, 110.
Foy, ii. 335.
South. i.
100. Lond.
i. 31, 32.
Nevis, 190,
200. Thiers,
viii. 328.

² Hard. x.
97, 98.

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LII.

1807.

18.
Extraor-
dinary diffi-
culties of his
march
through
Portugal.

he came only as an ally, and to save them from the hostility of the English.*

Two days afterwards the army entered Portugal, where they soon gave convincing proofs how little their declared resolution of protecting property and abstaining from every species of outrage was to be relied on. Pillage of every sort was systematically practised by all grades, from the commander-in-chief to the common soldier. Junot faithfully executed his instructions to employ the language of conciliation, but act upon the principle of the most decided hostility. Such conduct naturally made the inhabitants fly his approach; and this circumstance, joined to the forced marches the soldiers were compelled to make, and the excessive severity of the rains, which fall in that country at that period of the year with all the violence of the tropics, soon reduced the army to the most frightful state of disorder. Added to this, the rugged, impracticable nature of the roads, or rather mountain paths, which they were obliged to traverse, destitute of bridges and almost impassable for carriages, produced such an effect upon the French army, that in a few days it was as much disorganised as it would have been by the most disastrous defeat. Discipline was soon at an end; the commands of the officers were no longer attended to; the roll of the drum was drowned in the roar of the tempests; the soldiers, drenched from head to foot, lay down on the wayside without either food or shelter; and this finely-appointed army, six-and-twenty thousand strong when it left Bayonne, amounted, when it reached Abrantes in Portugal, only to four thousand stragglers, half without

* "The Emperor Napoleon sends me into your country at the head of an army, *to make common cause with your well-beloved sovereign* against the tyrant of the seas, and save your beautiful capital from the fate of Copenhagen. Discipline will be rigidly preserved; I give you my word of honour for it; but the smallest resistance will draw down the utmost severity of military execution. The Portuguese, I am persuaded, will discern their true interests, and, seconding the pacific views of their Prince, receive us as friends; and the city of Lisbon, in an especial manner, will behold us with pleasure within its walls, at the head of such an army as can alone preserve it from the eternal enemies of the Continent."

arms, more like ghosts than the array destined to subdue a kingdom. No words can do justice to the hardships which were undergone, and the disorder which ensued, during the march from the frontier to Abrantes: the firmness of the oldest officers, even in the leading column, was shaken by it, and those which followed hurried along without any order, like a confused horde of robbers.* Their feet, bound up, were nearly all bleeding; their faces pale and emaciated, their muskets broken into staffs for walking. Many battalions subsisted for days together on nothing but chestnuts, and the quantity even of that humble fare was so scanty that, from that cause among others, they lost several hundred men a-day: whole companies and squadrons were washed away in the ravines by the swollen mountain-torrents. At length, after undergoing incredible privations, the leading bands of the French army, only fifteen hundred strong, approached Lisbon in the end of November, but straggling in such small numbers, and in such deplorable condition, that they resembled rather the fugitives who had escaped from a disastrous retreat, than the proud array which was to overturn a dynasty and subdue a kingdom.¹

The elements of glorious resistance were not wanting in the Portuguese capital. Its inhabitants were three hundred thousand: its forts strong, defended by a numerous artillery, and garrisoned by fourteen thousand men: an English squadron lay in the Tagus with Sir Sidney Smith at its head, whose versatile genius was peculiarly fitted for such an undertaking, and who had shown at Acre what vigour he could infuse into a besieged population. The English sailors longed to see the work of defence

* "It is impossible," says Thiébault, an eye-witness, "to give an idea of the sufferings of the army before reaching Sobreira. In truth, if the leading columns were a prey to these horrors, which nothing could alleviate, it may easily be imagined what must have been the situation of those which succeeded them. The army, in truth, was on the verge of dissolution; it was on the point of disbanding altogether—the general-in-chief was within a hair's-breadth of being left without any followers. Nevertheless, it was indispensable not to halt for a moment; everything required to be risked: we were obliged to succeed, or bury ourselves in the mountains with the whole army."—THIÉBAULT, *Campagne en Portugal*, 45.

CHAP.
LII.

1807.

Nov. 28,
¹ Thib. 32,
 69. Foy, ii.
 335, 367.
 Tor. i. 35,
 36. Napier,
 i. 141. Lond.
 i. 33. Abr.
 xi. 25, 26.
 Nevis, 190,
 200. Thiers,
 viii. 329,
 336.

19.
 Conduct of
 the Portu-
 guese gov-
 ernment,
 and situa-
 tion of Lis-
 bon at this
 crisis.

CHAP.
LII.

1807.

Oct. 20.

Nov. 8.

Nov. 9.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 280.
South. i. 96,
97. Foy, ii.
377, 379.

begin : Sir Sidney offered to bring his ships abreast of the quay, and there, seconded by the indignant populace, dispute every inch of ground with the invader. But the destitute condition of the French army was unknown ; and even if it had been fully understood, both the Portuguese government and the English ambassador, Lord Strangford, were aware that Junot's was but the advanced-guard of a greater army, which would speedily follow if the first was discomfited ; and that any resistance would only serve to give the French Emperor an excuse for measures of extraordinary rigour against the Portuguese nation, without affording any reasonable prospect of ultimate success. The great object was to withdraw the royal family and the fleet from the grasp of the invaders, and secure for them a refuge in Brazil till the present calamitous season was overpast. As soon as they saw the danger approaching, therefore, the Portuguese government took every imaginable precaution to disarm the conqueror by anticipating all his requisitions. A proclamation, as already mentioned, was issued, closing the harbours against English vessels, and adopting the Continental System : and as the march of the invaders still continued, this was followed, a few days afterwards, by another, in which the more rigorous step of sequestrating the property, and arresting the persons of such of the English as still remained in Portugal, was adopted, though with the secret design of indemnifying the sufferers as soon as the means of doing so were at the disposal of government. Though this last measure was known to be exceedingly painful to the Portuguese government, and was evidently adopted under the mere pressure of necessity, yet it was a step of such decided hostility, that it compelled Lord Strangford to take down the arms of Great Britain from his house, and demand his passports ; and soon after, amidst the tears of the inhabitants, he followed the English factory to Sir Sidney Smith's fleet.¹

Although, however, the relations between the two

countries were thus formally broken, yet as it was well known that the cabinet of Lisbon had yielded only to unavoidable necessity, and as their tardiness in acceding to the demand of Napoleon for the instant seizure of British property had sufficiently demonstrated the reluctance with which measures of severity had been adopted by them, the British ambassador still remained on board the English fleet, ready to take advantage of the first opening which should occur for the resumption of more amicable correspondence. Meanwhile, everything at Lisbon was vacillation and chaos; and the Prince and his council, distracted between terror at the unceasing advance of Junot, and anxiety about the loss of their colonies and commerce by a rupture with England, hesitated between the bold counsels of Don Rodrigo de Lousa and the Count Linares, who strenuously recommended determined resistance to the invaders, and the natural timidity of a court surrounded with dangers and debilitated by the pacific habits of preceding reigns. At length, however, such information was received as determined the irresolution of the cabinet. An ominous line appeared in the *Moniteur*—"The house of Braganza has ceased to reign;" and with the paper containing that announcement of the fate which awaited them, Lord Strangford transmitted to the Prince Regent copies of the secret treaty and convention of Fontainebleau, by which the portions assigned to each of the partitioning powers were arranged.¹

Intelligence, received shortly after the entrance of the Spanish troops into Alentejo and the northern provinces of the kingdom, left no room for doubt that the copies were correct, and that the treaty was immediately to be acted upon. At the same time Lord Strangford landed, and assured his royal highness, on the honour of the King of England, that the measures hitherto adopted by the Portuguese court were regarded as mere compulsory acts, and had noways abated the friendship of his

CHAP.
LII.

1807.

20.

Hesitation
of the court
and Prince
Regent.

Nov. 13.

¹ Hard. x.
108, 109.
Foy, ii. 380,
383. Nev. i.
165, 171.
Moniteur,
Nov. 13,
1807.

21.

The abandon-
ment of
Portugal
at last re-
solved on.

CHAP.
LII.

1807.

Nov. 25.

Nov. 26.

1 Hard. x.

108, 111.

South. i.

103, 110.

Foy, ii. 380,

383. Tor.

i. 37, 39.

Nev. i. 165,

180. Lord

Strangford's

Pamphlet,

52, 75.

old ally, if he would still avail himself of it. These representations, seconded by the efforts of Sir Sidney Smith, who brought his squadron to the mouth of the harbour, ready alike for hostile operations or pacific assistance, gave such support to Don Rodrigo and the patriotic party, that the court resolved, if the messenger despatched to obtain a stoppage of Junot's advance was not successful, to embark for the Brazils. He entirely failed in arresting the march of the French general, and orders were therefore given that the fleet should, as speedily as possible, be got ready for sea; and the Prince Regent published a dignified proclamation on the following day, in which he announced a resolution worthy of the former heroism of the house of Braganza, and prepared to seek in Transatlantic climes "that freedom of which Europe had become unworthy."¹*

22.
Embarka-
tion of the
royal family
for Brazil.
Nov. 27.

The fleet at first was in a state but little prepared for crossing the Atlantic, and still less for conveying the motley and helpless crowd of old men, women, and children, who were preparing to follow the court in their migration to South America. By great exertions, however, and the active aid of the British sailors, who, overjoyed at this extraordinary energy on the part of the Prince Regent, exerted themselves with unheard-of vigour in giving assistance, eight sail of the line, three frigates, five sloops, and a number of merchant vessels, in all six-and-thirty sail, were got ready on the following day, when the royal family prepared to carry their mournful but magnanimous resolution into execution. Preceded by

* "Having tried, by all possible means, to preserve the neutrality hitherto enjoyed by my faithful and beloved subjects; having exhausted my royal treasury, and made innumerable other sacrifices, even going to the extremity of shutting the ports of my dominions to the subjects of my ancient and royal ally, the King of Great Britain, thus exposing the commerce of my people to total ruin, and consequently suffering the greatest losses in the collection of the royal revenue, I find that the troops of the Emperor of France, to whom I had united myself on the Continent with the hope of being no more disturbed, are actually marching into the interior of my dominions, and are far on their way toward this capital. Desirous to avoid the fatal consequences of a defence, which

the archives, treasure, plate, and most valuable effects, the royal exiles proceeded in a long train of carriages to the water's edge. Never had been seen a more melancholy procession, or one more calculated to impress on the minds even of the most inconsiderate, the magnitude of the calamities which the unbounded ambition of France had brought on the other nations of Europe. The insane queen came in the first carriage: for sixteen years she had lived in seclusion, but a ray of light had penetrated her reason in this extremity, and she understood and approved the courageous act. "What!" said she, "shall we abandon the kingdom without a blow? Not so fast," addressing the coachman, "they will think we are flying." The widowed princess and the infanta Maria were in the next, with the Princess of Brazil, bathed in tears; after them came the Prince Regent, pale and weeping at thus leaving, apparently for ever, the land of his fathers. In the magnitude of the royal distress, the multitude forgot their own dangers; their commiseration was all for the august fugitives, thus driven by ruthless violence to a distant shore, with the descendants of a long line of kings, forced to seek, in mournful exile, an asylum from the hand of the spoiler.¹

Such was the crowd which assembled round the place of embarkation, that the prince was compelled to force his way through with his own hand. There was not a dry eye among all the countless multitude, when they stepped on board; uncovered and weeping, the people beheld, in speechless sorrow, the departure of their ancient rulers. In the general confusion of the embarka-

¹ Nevis, 175,
177. South.
i. 107. Foy,
i. 383, 390.
Bign. vii.
28.

23.
Universal
grief with
which it was
attended.

would be far more dangerous than profitable, serving only to occasion a boundless effusion of blood, shocking to humanity, and to inflame the animosity of the troops which have entered this kingdom with the declaration and promise of not committing the smallest hostility; and knowing also, that they are more particularly directed against my royal person, and that my faithful subjects would be less exposed to danger if I were absent from the kingdom, I have resolved to retire, with the queen and royal family, to my dominions in America, and to establish myself in the city of Rio Janeiro till a general peace."—*Ann. Reg.* 1807, 776, *State Papers*.

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tion, parents were separated from children, husbands from wives, and numbers of both remained ignorant of each other's safety till they landed in the Brazils; while the shore resounded with the lamentations of those who were thus severed, probably for ever, from those whom they most loved. It was some consolation to the crowd, who watched with aching eyes the receding sails, to see the royal fleet, as it passed through the British squadron, received with a royal salute from all the vessels—emblematic of the protection which Great Britain now extended to her ancient ally, and an earnest of that heroic support which, through all the desperate conflict which followed, England was destined to afford to her courageous inhabitants. Numbers, however, observed, with superstitious dread, that at the moment of the salute the sun became eclipsed, and mournfully repeated the words, "The house of Braganza has ceased to reign." Never had a city been penetrated with a more unanimous feeling of grief; the royal family, kindly and warm-hearted, had long enjoyed the affections of the people; the bitterness of conquest was felt without its excitement. In mournful silence the people lingered on the quay from whence the royal party had taken their departure; every one, in returning to his home, felt as if he had lost a parent or a child. Fifteen thousand persons in all were got on board, and followed the fortunes of the royal family to the New World. They were conveyed in eight sail of the line, three frigates, and a great number of transports and smaller vessels pressed into the service for the occasion. The embarkation took place from the quay of Belem, on the same spot from whence, three centuries before, Vasco de Gama had sailed upon that immortal voyage which first opened to European enterprise the regions of Oriental commerce, and whence Cabral set forth upon that expedition which gave Portugal an empire in the west, and had provided in the New World for her an asylum, in the future wreck of her fortunes in the Old.¹

¹ Nevis, 175, 180. South. i. 107, 113. Hard. x. 108, 111, 112. Foy, ii. 383, 390. Tor. i. 39, 40. Ann. Reg. 1807, 281. Bign. vii. 28.

Hardly had the royal squadron, amidst tempestuous gales, cleared the bar, and disappeared from the shores of Europe, when the advanced-guard of Junot's army, reduced to sixteen hundred men and a few horsemen, arrived on the towers of Belem. He came just in time to see the fleet receding in the distance, and in the ebullition of his passion, himself discharged a piece of ordnance at a merchant vessel, which, long retarded by the multitude who were thronging on board, was hastening, under the walls of that fortress, to join the fleet which had preceded it. Although, however, the French troops were so few, and in such deplorable condition as to excite pity rather than apprehension, yet no resistance was made; the regency, to whom the prince-royal had, on his departure, intrusted the administration of affairs, wisely deeming a contest hopeless from which the government itself shrank, and regarding as their first duty the negotiating favourable terms for the inhabitants with the invaders. Resistance, therefore, was not attempted; and Europe beheld with astonishment a capital containing three hundred thousand inhabitants, and fourteen thousand regular troops, open its gates to a wretched file of soldiers without a single piece of cannon, the vanguard of which, worn out and attenuated, not fifteen hundred strong, could hardly bear their muskets on their shoulders, while the succeeding columns were scattered in deplorable confusion over mountain-paths two hundred miles in length. Such was their state of starvation, that, on entering the city, many of the soldiers dropped down in the streets, or sank exhausted in the porches of the houses, being unable to ascend the stairs, until the Portuguese humanely brought them sustenance. Lisbon received its new masters on the anniversary of the very day (30th November) on which, a hundred and sixty-seven years before, the Portuguese had overturned the tyranny of the Spaniards, and re-established, amidst universal transport, the national independence.¹

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24.

Arrival of
the French
at Lisbon.
Nov. 30.

¹ Thib. vi.
271. Thiéb.
68, 69, 72.
Nevis, i.
185, 213.
South. i.
116, 117.
Foy, ii. 400,
403.

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25.

The country
is occupied
by Junot in
name of the
French :
enormous
contribu-
tions levied
by the
troops.

Junot immediately took military possession of the country ; the French troops were cantoned chiefly in the capital and the strongholds in its vicinity ; while Elvas surrendered to the Spanish general Solano, and Taranco, with the northern corps of the troops of that nation, took peaceable possession of the important and opulent city of Oporto. The strict discipline maintained by these Peninsular corps, afforded a striking contrast to the license indulged in by the French soldiers, whose march, albeit through a friendly state, which had as yet committed no act of hostility, was marked by plunder, devastation, and ruin. Hopes even began to be entertained by those in the French interest, that the independence of their country might still be preserved. But these hopes were of short duration ; and Portugal soon experienced, in all its bitterness, the fate of all the countries which, from the commencement of the war, had received, whether as friends or enemies, the tricolor flag. Heavy contributions, both in money, subsistence, and clothing, had from the outset been levied by the French troops ; and Junot, with almost regal state, was lodged in the now deserted palace. But the first was ascribed by their deluded friends to the necessitous and destitute condition of the French troops ; and the last was forgiven in an officer whose head, never equal to his valour, appeared to have been altogether carried away by the novelty and importance of the situation in which he was now placed.¹

¹ Nevis, i.
250, 261.
Thib. vi.
273, 274.
Lond. i. 45.
Foy, iii. 11,
12.

26.

Hoisting of
the French
flag on the
forts of Lis-
bon.

All uncertainty, however, was soon at an end. A fortnight after their arrival, a review of six thousand troops in the capital took place : the soldiers were assembled in the principal streets and squares—the infantry in battalions, the cavalry in squadrons, the artillery limbered up and in order for service ; and the whole population of the neighbourhood crowded together to witness the spectacle. Suddenly the thunder of cannon from the Moorish fort attracted their attention ; all eyes were instantly turned in that direction, and they beheld the ancient flag of Por-

tugal torn from the staff, upon which the tricolor standard was immediately hoisted. The magnitude of the calamity now became apparent: Portugal, seized by a perfidious ally, was to be reduced to a province of France. At first, a solemn silence prevailed; but soon a hoarse murmur, like the distant roar of the ocean, arose, and cries of "Portugal for ever! Death to the French!" were heard on all sides. But the principal persons of the city were secured, the populace were unarmed, and the forts and batteries were all in the hands of the invaders. The evening passed in feverish agitation; but the people, destitute of leaders, were unable to turn the general indignation to any account, and the day closed without any convulsion having occurred.¹

This measure, however significant as to the ultimate designs of the conqueror, was yet only a demonstration; and as the police of Lisbon was rigidly enforced by the French, and no other change was made in the government but the introduction of two or three creatures of Napoleon's into the regency, which still administered the laws in the name of the Prince Regent, hopes began to be again entertained that the occupation would prove only temporary. But the events which rapidly succeeded, demonstrated that Portugal was destined to drain to the dregs the cup of humiliation before the day of its political resurrection came. A forced loan of 2,000,000 cruzados (£200,000) was exacted from the merchants, though their fortunes were seriously affected by the blockade of the harbour, and the complete stoppage of foreign commerce and public credit. The entire confiscation of English goods was next proclaimed, and ordered to be enforced by tenfold penalties and corporal punishment; while the carrying of arms of any sort was strictly prohibited, under the pain of death, over the whole kingdom. Meanwhile, fresh troops, the last columns of Junot's array, daily poured into the capital; and, to accommodate them, the monks were all turned out of the convents, which were forthwith

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¹ Nevis, i.
250, 273.
Lond. i. 45,
46. Thib.
vi. 273, 274.
South. i.
123, 125.
Foy, iii.
11, 14.

27.

The regency
is at length
dissolved by
Junot, and
the whole
country
seized by
the French.

Dec. 5.

Dec. 6.

- CHAP. converted into military barracks. Still no indication of
 LII. a permanent partition of the kingdom had appeared at
 1808. Lisbon, and Junot seemed chiefly intent on a small
 Jan. 1808. squadron which he was fitting out with great expedition
 in the harbour, apparently against the English ; although
 the Spanish officers at Oporto and in Alentejo made
 no secret of the treaty of Fontainebleau, and had already
 begun to levy the revenue collected there in the name of
 Feb. 1. the King of Spain. But on the 1st February the mask
 was completely thrown aside, and it appeared that Napo-
 leon was resolved to appropriate the whole monarchy to
 himself, without allotting any portion to his confederates
 in iniquity. On that day Junot went in state to the
 palace of the Inquisition, a fitting place for such a deed,
 where the regency was assembled, and, after a studied
 harangue, read a proclamation of Napoleon, dated from
 Milan in the December preceding, followed by a procla-
 mation of his own, which at once dissolved the regency
 Dec. 23, —appointed Junot governor of the whole kingdom, with
 1807. instructions to administer it all in the name of the
 Emperor Napoleon—ordained a large body of Portuguese
 Feb. 1, troops to be forthwith marched out of the Peninsula—
 1808. and for the support of the army of occupation, now
 termed the army of Portugal, imposed a contribution of
 a hundred million of francs, (£4,000,000,) above double
 the annual revenue of the monarchy,* upon its inhabi-
 tants, besides confiscating the whole property of the

¹Foy, iii. 15,
 23. Lond. i.
 47, 49. Tor.
 i. 41, 42, 49,
 50. Nevis,
 i. 263, 288.

* "Inhabitants of Portugal," said Junot's proclamation, "your interests have engaged the attention of the Emperor : it is time that all uncertainty as to your fate should cease ; the fate of Portugal is fixed, and its future prosperity secured by its being taken under the all-powerful protection of Napoleon the Great. The Prince of Brazil, by abandoning Portugal, has renounced all his rights to the sovereignty of that kingdom ; the house of Braganza has ceased to reign in *Portugal* ; the Emperor Napoleon has determined that that beautiful country, governed over its whole extent in his name, shall be administered by the general-in-chief of his army." Thus did Napoleon first sign a treaty at Fontainebleau for the entire spoliation of the Portuguese dominions ; next, by his perfidious invasion, drive the ruling sovereign into exile ; and then assign that very compulsory departure as a reason for the previously determined appropriation of the whole of his territories to himself. — See both the *Milan Decree* and *JUNOT'S Proclamation* in Foy, iii. 343, 345 ; *Pièces Just.*

royal family and of all who had attended them in their flight.

These orders were instantly carried into effect. The Portuguese arms were everywhere taken down from the public offices and buildings, and those of imperial France substituted in their room. Justice was administered in the name of the French Emperor, and by the Code Napoleon ; the whole revenue was collected by the French authorities, and the regiments assigned for the foreign army moved towards the frontiers. A universal despair seized all classes at this clear manifestation of the subjugation of their country. The peasants, heart-broken and desperate, refused to sow their fields with grain ; the soldiers, wherever they were not overawed by a superior force of the French army, disbanded and returned home, or betook themselves to the mountains as robbers ; the higher classes almost all fled from Lisbon, as from a city visited by the plague ; and, notwithstanding the presence and influence of the French, only three houses were lighted on occasion of the general illumination ordered by the invaders, in honour of the change of government. In the provinces, the general indignation was manifested in still more unequivocal colours. The growing insolence and rapacity of the French soldiers brought them into frequent conflicts with the now aroused population ; tumults, massacres, and military executions, occurred in almost every city, village, and hamlet of Portugal ; and Junot, alarmed at the increasing ferment, formally disbanded the whole of the army* which had not been ordered to

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28.

Complete
occupation
of the king-
dom by the
French, and
despair of
the inhabi-
tants.

* The Portuguese legion thus drafted off for France was at first nine thousand strong, but five thousand deserted or died on the march through Spain, and not four thousand reached Bayonne. Napoleon, however, who there reviewed them, said to Prince Volkonski, "These are the men of the South ; they are of an impassioned temperament ; I will make them excellent soldiers." They served with distinction both in Austria and Russia, and were particularly noticed for their good conduct at Wagram in 1809, and Smolensko in 1812. They were faithful to their colours and oaths, though still in their hearts attached to their country, and bore on their standards this striking device—

"Vadimus immixti Danaïs ; haud numine nostro."

—Foy, iii. 40, 41, *note*.

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March 13.
1 Lond. i. 50,
54. South. i.
152, 162.
Nevis, i.
240, 249.
Foy, ii. 5,
38. Bign.
vii. 84.

proceed to France. Meanwhile plunder was universal from the highest rank to the lowest ; and the general-in-chief set the example of general spoliation, by appropriating to himself plate and valuable articles of every description, collected from the churches and royal palaces. No sooner had Napoleon received intelligence of the subjugation of the kingdom, however, than, disregarding alike the declared wishes of the inhabitants and the stipulations of the treaty of Fontainebleau, so recently signed by himself, he made offer of the crown of Portugal to his brother Lucien, accompanied with a hint that his daughter by his first marriage might obtain the hand of the Prince of Asturias, an alliance which that prince had already solicited. Lucien, however, with honourable disinterestedness, refused both offers, as they were coupled with the condition that he should repudiate his second wife, Miss Paterson, an American by birth, to whom he was much attached.¹

29.
Arrest of
Ferdinand,
and seizure
of his papers.

While the fate of Portugal was thus to all appearance sealed by the usurpation of Napoleon, events of still greater importance were in progress in relation to the Spanish monarchy, which, in their immediate effects, precipitated the explosion of the Peninsular war. Whatever care the advisers of Ferdinand may have taken to conceal from the reigning monarch his letter of 11th October, proposing, without his father's knowledge, an alliance with the imperial family, so important a step did not long remain unknown to the Prince of the Peace. The numerous spies in his employment who surrounded the heir-apparent, both in the French capital and his palace of the Escorial, got scent of the secret ; Isquierdo transmitted from Paris intelligence that some negotiation of importance was in progress, in consequence of which the Prince was more narrowly watched ; and as the evident anxiety and preoccupation of his mind seemed to justify the suspicions which were entertained, he was at length arrested by orders of his father, and

seals put on all his papers. He was privately examined before the privy council, and afterwards reconducted as a prisoner by the King himself, in great state at the head of his guards, to the palace of the Escorial, whose walls, still melancholy from the tragic catastrophe of the unfortunate Don Carlos in a preceding reign, were fraught with the most sinister presages.¹

Among his private papers were found one written entirely by the hand of the Prince, blank in date, and with a black seal, bestowing on the Duke del Infantado the office of governor-general of New Castile, and all the forces within its bounds, in the event of the King's death; a key to the correspondence in cipher formerly carried on by the late Princess of Asturias and the Queen of Naples, her mother; and a memorial of twelve pages to the King, filled with bitter complaints of the long-continued persecution of which the prince had been the object, denouncing the Prince of the Peace as guilty of the most wicked designs, even that of mounting the throne by the death of his royal master, and proposing a variety of steps to secure the arrest of that powerful favourite. A paper of five pages was also discovered, written, like the preceding, by Escoiquiz, detailing the measures adopted by the Prince of the Peace to bring about a marriage between the heir-apparent and his wife's sister, and the best mode of avoiding it; and hinting at the prospect of an alliance between the Prince of Asturias and a member of the imperial family of France. In these papers, thus laid open without reserve to the royal scrutiny, there was nothing, with the exception of the first, which had even the appearance of implicating the Prince in any design against his father's life or authority; though much descriptive of that envenomed rancour between his confidants and those of the reigning monarch, which the long ascendant of the Prince of the Peace, and the animosity which had prevailed between him and the heir-apparent, were so well calculated to

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Oct. 29.
1 Tor. i. 22.
Foy, ii. 99.
South. i.
187.

30.
Contents of
the more
important
ones.

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¹ Tor. i. 22,
23. Thib. vi.
283, 284.
Foy, ii. 99.
South. i.
187, 188.

produce. Even the first, though it indicated an obvious preparation for the contemplated event of the King's decease, and fairly inferred an anxiety for that event, could not, when taken by itself without any other evidence, be considered as a legitimate ground for concluding that so atrocious an act as the murder or deposition of the King was in contemplation; since it was equally referable to the anxiety of the heir-apparent, who had given no indications of so depraved a disposition, to secure the succession, menaced as he conceived it to be, upon his father's natural demise.¹

31.
Proclamation
of the
King on the
subject, and
correspondence
with
Napoleon.

Oct. 30.

² Tor. i. 23,
24. Nell. i.
4, 5. Thib.
vi. 284, 285.
Thiers, viii.
303, 304.

Revealed, however, to a corrupted court, and falling into the hands of persons actuated by the worst suspicions, because themselves capable of the most nefarious designs, these papers afforded too fair an opportunity to Godoy and his party of ruining the prince, and at the same time gave a clear indication of the danger which they would themselves run upon his accession to the throne, to be laid aside without being made the foundation of decisive measures. On the very next day, accordingly, a proclamation was issued from the Escorial by the King, in which the Prince of Asturias was openly charged with having engaged in a conspiracy for the dethronement and death of his father; and the immediate prosecution and trial of all his advisers was announced to the bewildered public.* At the same time despatches were forwarded to Napoleon,² reiterating the same charges, and

* It was stated in this proclamation—"I was living persuaded that I was surrounded with the love due to a parent by his offspring, when an unknown hand suddenly revealed to me the monstrous and unheard-of conspiracy which had been formed against my life. That life, so often endangered, had become a burden to my successor, who, preoccupied, blinded, and forgetful of all the Christian principles which my care and paternal love have taught him, had engaged in a conspiracy for my dethronement. I was anxious myself to ascertain the fact, and, surprising him in his own apartment, I discovered the cipher which enabled him to correspond with his companions in iniquity. Everything necessary has been done, and the proper orders given for the trial of these guilty associates, whom I have ordered to be put under arrest, as well as directed the confinement of my son to his own apartments."—*Proclamation, 30th October 1807*; TORENO, i. 34.

earnestly imploring his counsel and assistance in extricating his unfortunate ally from the difficulties with which he was surrounded.*

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When Napoleon, however, received this letter, he was noways disposed to lend any assistance to Charles IV., on whose dethronement he was fully resolved, though he was as yet uncertain as to the particular means or course to be followed in order to effect that object. He determined, accordingly, to keep himself entirely clear from these dissensions, took the utmost care that his name should not in any way be mixed up with them, and resolved only to take advantage of their existence, to get quit, if possible, of both father and son. He said, therefore, on receipt of the letter,—“These are domestic concerns of the King of Spain; I will have nothing to do with them.” At the same time Champagny, minister of foreign affairs, wrote to the Prince of the Peace, that on no account was the Emperor’s name to be implicated in this affair:† and Talleyrand gave the same assurances in the strongest terms to Isquierdo; protesting at the same time Napoleon’s fixed resolution to carry into execution

32.
Cautious
conduct of
the latter on
reading it.

* “Sire, my brother—At the moment when I was exclusively occupied with the means of destroying our common enemy, and fondly hoped that all the plots of the late Queen of Naples were buried with her daughter, I discovered with horror that the spirit of intrigue had penetrated the interior of my palace, and that my eldest son, the heir-presumptive to the throne, had not only formed the design to dethrone, but even to attempt the life of myself and his mother. Such an atrocious attempt merits the most exemplary punishment; the law which calls him to the succession should be repealed; one of my brothers will be more worthy to replace him in my heart, and on the throne. I pray your majesty to aid me by your wisdom and counsel.”—CHARLES IV. to NAPOLEON: *St Lorenzo*, 30th October 1807. SAVARY, iii. 143.

† “The Emperor insists that on no account should anything be said or published in relation to this affair, which involves him or his ambassador. He has done nothing which could justify a suspicion that either he himself or his minister have known or encouraged any domestic intrigues of Spain. He declares positively that he never has, and never will, intermeddle with them. He never intended that the Prince of Asturias should marry a princess of France, or Mademoiselle Tascher, long since affianced to another; he will oppose no marriage of the Prince of Asturias with any person he pleases; his ambassador Beauharnais has instructions to take no part in the affairs of Spain.”—CHAMPAGNY to the PRINCE OF THE PEACE, 15th November 1807; THIBAUDEAU, vi. 291, 292.

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the whole provisions of the treaty of Fontainebleau.* But though thus cautious to avoid any act which might implicate him in these transactions, Napoleon was not the less active in making every preparation for turning to the best account the dissensions of the royal family of Spain. From that moment he resolved to make them the means of overturning the whole Bourbon dynasty. Orders were immediately sent to the second army of the Gironde, under General Dupont, to cross the frontier; and at Bayonne a third was hastily formed under Moncey, to act as a reserve to the two which preceded it. At the same time forty-eight depots of battalions, mustering twenty-eight thousand combatants, were drawn from the troops on the Rhine, and ordered to move in the same direction. Mean time, the storm which threatened such serious consequences blew over in Spain, from a discovery of the party who was at the bottom of the intrigue. The Prince of Asturias, justly alarmed for his life, revealed, in a private interview with his father and mother, the letter he had written to Napoleon, proposing his hand to one of his relations, and at the same time disclosed all the parties, not excluding the French ambassador, who were privy to that proceeding.¹

Oct. 30.
¹ Tor. i. 26,
29. Nell. i.
5, 6. Thib.
vi. 285, 290.
Thiers, viii.
305.

33.
Pardon of
the Prince
of Asturias.
Nov. 5.

This disclosure operated like a charm in stilling the fury of the faction opposed to the prince. Ignorant of the extent or intimacy of his relations with the French Emperor, they recoiled at the idea of driving to extremities the heir of the throne, who might possibly have engaged so powerful a protector in his cause. The matter was therefore hushed up; the prince wrote penitential letters to his father and mother, avowing "that he had failed in his duty, inasmuch as he should have taken no

* "What chiefly shocked the Emperor," said Talleyrand to Isquierdo on 15th November, "was, after the treaty of 27th October, to see himself apparently implicated, in the face of Europe, in intrigues and treasons. He has expressed a natural indignation at it, because it affects his honour and probity. The Emperor desires only the strict execution of the treaty of Fontainebleau."—THIBAUDEAU, vi. 291.

step without their concurrence," and throwing himself on their mercy. Upon this a decree of the King was issued, declaring, "The voice of nature has disarmed the arm of vengeance: when a guilty party solicits pardon, the heart of a father cannot refuse it to a son. My son has disclosed the authors of the horrible plan which some wretches have put into his head; I pardon him, and shall receive him to favour when he has given proofs of sincere amendment." The trial of the prince's confidants went on; but terminated, three months after, in their entire acquittal, to the great joy of the nation, which had never attached any credit to this alleged conspiracy, but considered it as a got-up device of the Prince of the Peace to ruin his rival Escoiquiz. Nevertheless, that acute counsellor, as well as the Dukes of Infantado and St Carlos, with several others, were kept in confinement, or sent into exile; and Napoleon, who in truth had not instigated this intrigue, but saw the advantage it would give him in his designs against the Peninsula, was rejoiced to see the father and son thus envenomed against each other, and secretly resolved to dispossess them both.¹ *

It was not long before this resolution to appropriate to himself a part, at least, of the Spanish dominions, without the slightest regard to his recent and solemn guarantee of their integrity in the treaty of Fontainebleau, was acted upon by the French Emperor. The force of forty thousand men, which had been provided for at Bayonne by that treaty, but which was not to enter Spain except with the consent of the King of Spain, was now increased, in consequence of the orders already noticed, to sixty thousand; and without any authority from the Spanish government, and though the situation of Portugal noways called for their advance, they began to cross the frontier, and take the road, not towards Lisbon, *but Madrid*.

* "I never," said Napoleon, "excited the King of Spain against his son. I saw them envenomed against each other, and thence conceived the design of deriving advantage to myself, and *dispossessing both*."—O'MEARA, ii. 160.

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1807.

Jan. 20,
1808.

1 O'Meara,
ii. 160. Tor.
i. 26, 33.
Nell. i. 5, 6.
Thib. vi.
285, 297.
South. i.
187, 191.

34.
Entrance of
the French
troops into
Spain.
Nov. 22.

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1808.

Jan. 9.

Twenty-four thousand infantry and four thousand horse, with forty guns, under Dupont, first passed the Bidassoa, and moved towards Valladolid, where headquarters were established in the beginning of January. A second army, under Moncey, consisting of twenty-five thousand foot, three thousand horse, and forty pieces of artillery, soon followed; and such was the haste with which these troops were forwarded to their destination, that they were conveyed across France by post, and rapidly defiled towards the Ebro. At the same time, on the other extremity of the Pyrenees, Duhesme, with twelve thousand infantry, two thousand cavalry, and twenty cannon, entered Catalonia, and took the road to Barcelona. Nor was the Emperor less active in bringing forward additional troops, to act as a reserve to those thus pushed forward into the Peninsula. The old battalions of the Grand Army were directed towards the Rhine, from the north of Germany; the whole country beyond the Vistula was evacuated by the French troops. Davoust, with his numerous corps, the Poles and the Saxons, moved to the country between the Vistula and the Oder. Soult, with his corps, was recalled from Old Prussia to the west of that kingdom; the Imperial Guard received orders to march on Paris. But though this general move to the westward took place, the Emperor's hold of the north of Germany was not sensibly relaxed. Mortier with his corps was left in Silesia: Victor, with his corps and the reserve cavalry, continued to occupy Berlin: Bernadotte was in Stralsund, and all the fortresses on the Oder and the Elbe were still in the hands of the French. It was not surprising that Napoleon was able in this manner to keep hold of all Europe, for he had at this time 800,000 men in arms of the French empire, besides 150,000 of the allied states.¹ *

¹ Foy, iii.
72, 74. Tor.
i. 46, 47.
Lond. i. 55,
56. Thiers,
viii. 306,
307.

* "J'ai plus de 800,000 hommes sur pied. J'ai une armée encore sur la Passarge, près du Niémen, j'en ai une à Varsovie, j'en ai une en Silésie, j'en ai une à Hambourg, j'en ai une à Berlin, j'en ai une à Boulogne, j'en ai une qui marche sur le Portugal, j'en ai une seconde que je réunis à Bayonne, j'en ai une en Italie, j'en ai une en Dalmatie que je renforce en ce moment de 6 mille hommes,

Although the operations in Portugal afforded no sort of reason for this formidable invasion, yet, so much were the inhabitants of the country in the habit of yielding implicit obedience to the French authorities, in consequence of the submissive attitude of their government for so long a period, that it excited very little attention either in Spain or over the rest of Europe—to the greater part of which it was almost unknown. Public attention followed the progress of the Emperor in Italy; and, dazzled by the splendid pageants and important changes which were there going forward, paid little regard to the progress of obscure corps on the Pyrenean frontier. Notwithstanding all their infatuation, however, the cabinet of Madrid were not without anxiety at this uncalled-for and suspicious invasion of their frontiers. But they were deceived by the repeated assurances which they received, both verbally and in writing, from the French ministers, of the determination of the Emperor to execute all the provisions of the treaty of Fontainebleau;* and the Prince of the Peace was fearful lest, by starting ill-timed suspicions, he might put in hazard the brilliant prospects which he conceived were opening both to the Spanish monarchy and himself from the spoliation of Portugal. They were involved in the meshes of guilty ambition, and could not extricate themselves from its toils till they had themselves become its prey.¹

The time, however, was now rapidly approaching when Napoleon deemed it safe to throw off the mask. No sooner had he returned from Italy to Paris than the minister of war transmitted a message to the senate, requiring the levy of eighty thousand conscripts out of those who should become liable to serve in 1809—a requisition which that obsequious body forthwith voted by acclamation, though the peace of Tilsit had, to all

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35.

The Prince
of the Peace
does not
venture to
remonstrate
against this
invasion.

¹ Tor. i. 43,
48. Nell. i.
9, 10. South.
i. 195.

36.

New levy
in France.
Treacherous
seizure of
Pampeluna.
Jan. 6.

j'en ai une à Naples. J'ai des garnisons sur toutes mes frontières de mer."—
NAPOLÉON to JOSEPH, 21st October 1807; THIERS, viii. 310, *note*.

* See *ante*, Chap. LII. § 13.

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Jan. 14.

Feb. 9.

appearance, closed the Temple of Janus for a very long period, at least in regard to Continental wars. This warlike message, though levelled ostensibly at England, contained ambiguous expressions which pointed not unequivocally to projects of aggrandisement on the side of the Spanish peninsula.* Shortly after, the French forces began, by fraud and false pretences, to make themselves masters of the frontier fortresses of Spain; and the success with which their dishonourable stratagems were crowned was such as almost to exceed belief, and such as could not have occurred except in a monarchy debilitated by a long period of despotic misrule. Pampeluna was the first to be surprised. Early in February, General d'Armagnac directed his steps on this perfidious mission through Roncesvalles, the traditional scene of heroic achievement, now for the first time the theatre of disgraceful treachery. He first requested leave from the governor of that fortress to lodge two battalions with the Spanish troops in the citadel: and when this was refused, remained for some days in the town on the most friendly terms with the Spanish garrison, until they were so completely thrown off their guard, that he succeeded in surprising the principal gate of the citadel by means of three hundred men, admitted one by one, with arms under their cloaks, during the night, into his house, which was within the walls, while the attention of the Spanish sentinels was taken off by his soldiers pelting each other in sport with snow-balls close to the drawbridge of the citadel.¹ Next morning a proclamation appeared, beseeching the inhabitants to "consider this as only a trifling change, incapable of disturbing the harmony which ought to subsist

¹ Tor. i. 51,
52. South. i.
197, 198.
Lond. i. 56.
Foy, iii. 81,
84.

* "There is a necessity," said Clarke and Champagny, "of having considerable forces on all points exposed to attack, in order to be in a situation to take advantage of any favourable circumstances which may occur to carry the war into the bosom of England, to Ireland, or the Indies. Vulgar politicians conceive the Emperor should disarm; such a proceeding would be a real scourge to France. It is not enough to have an army in Portugal; Spain is in alarm for Cadiz; Ceuta is menaced; the English have disembarked many troops in the neighbourhood of Gibraltar; they have directed to that quarter

between two faithful allies." The surprise was complete ; but the perfidy and disgrace so evident, that the brave d'Armagnac, who gained it, expressed his disgust at being employed on such a service in his despatches to Berthier announcing it.*

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1808.

Duhesme's instructions were, in like manner, to make himself master of Barcelona ; and he was not long of fulfilling his orders. Boldly advancing towards that fortress, under the pretence of pursuing his march to Valencia, he totally disregarded the summons of the Conde de Espeleta, the captain-general of the province, who required him to suspend his movements till advices were received from Madrid, and so intimidated the governor, by threatening to throw upon him the whole responsibility of any differences which might arise between the two nations from the refusal to admit the French soldiers within the walls, that he succeeded in getting possession of the town. Still, however, Fort Montjuic and the citadel were in the hands of the Spaniards ; but the same system of audacious treachery shortly after made the invaders masters of these strongholds. Count Theodore Lecchi, the commander of the Italian division, assembled his troops as for a parade on the glacis of the citadel. After the inspection was over, the Italian general came with his staff on horseback, to converse with the Spanish officers, and insensibly moved forward to the drawbridge ; and while still there, so as to prevent its being drawn up, a company of grenadiers stole unperceived round the palisades, and rushing in, disarmed the Spanish guard at the gate, and introduced four battalions, who got possession of the place. Montjuic fell still more easily : the

37.
Of Barce-
lona.
Feb. 13.

Feb. 28.

those which have been recalled from the Levant or withdrawn from Sicily. The vigilance of their cruisers on the Spanish coast is hourly increasing ; they seem disposed to avenge themselves on that kingdom for the reverses they have experienced in the colonies. *The whole Peninsula, therefore, in an especial manner calls for the attention of his majesty.*"—CLARKE and CHAMPAGNY'S *Reports, Moniteur, 24th Jan. 1808* ; and FOY, iii. 76, 77.

* "Ce sont là de vilaines missions."—D'ARMAGNAC *au Ministre de la Guerre, Feb. 9, 1808* ; THIERS, viii. 490.

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LII.

1808.

Feb. 29.

¹ Tor. i. 53,

58. Nell. i.

106. Foy,

ii. 78, 80.

governor, though a man of courage and honour, was unable to withstand the peremptory summons of the French general, who audaciously demanded the surrender of that impregnable fortress, with the menace to render him responsible for the whole consequences of a war with France, which would inevitably result from a refusal.¹*

33.

And of
Figueras
and San
Sebastian.

San Fernando de Figueras next fell into the hands of the French. The governor, on his guard against surprise, was cajoled into permitting two hundred conscripts to be lodged in the citadel, the finest fortification in Spain, under pretence that there was not accommodation for them in the town. Instead of conscripts, chosen soldiers were introduced, who in the night overpowered the sentinels, and admitted four regiments that lay in the neighbourhood. Finally, San Sebastian, the key to the great road from Bayonne to Madrid, and the destined theatre of such desperate struggles between the French and English, was obtained on still more easy terms. By permission of the Spaniards, it had become the depot for the hospital of the French regiments who had passed through; but the governor, conceiving disquietude at the visible increase in the number of these pretended patients, and having learned some indiscreet expressions of Murat as to San Sebastian being indispensable to the security of the French army, communicated his fears to the captain-general of the province, and also to the Prince of the Peace, with an earnest request for instructions.² The

March 3.

² Tor. i. 53,

58. Foy, ii.

78, 85. Nell.

i. 10. South.

i. 199, 204.

Thib. vi.

312.

* "My soldiers," said he, "are in possession of the citadel; instantly open the gates of Montjuic, for I have the special commands of the Emperor Napoleon to place garrisons in your fortresses. If you hesitate, I will on the spot declare war against Spain, and you will be exclusively responsible for all the torrents of blood which your resistance will cause to be shed." The name of Napoleon produced all these marvellous effects; it operated like a charm in paralysing the resistance even of the most intrepid spirits; many could encounter death, few had the moral courage to undergo the political risk consequent on resistance to his mandate. The Spanish governors at this period had also another excuse—the perfidy with which they were assailed by his orders was so unprecedented as to be inconceivable to men of honour.—See Foy, iii. 80.

prince, too far gone to recede, counselled submission, though his eyes were now opened to the treachery of which he had been the victim ; and, to his disgrace be it said, the last bulwark of his country was yielded up in consequence of express instructions from him, written with his own hand.*

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Thus were taken, by the treachery and artifices of the French Emperor, the four frontier fortresses of Spain ; those which command the three great roads by Perpignan, Navarre, and Biscay, across the Pyrenees, and the possession of which gives an invader the entire command of the only passes practicable for an army from France into the Peninsula. And they were taken not only during a period of profound peace, but of close alliance between the two countries, and by a power which, only a few months before, had solemnly guaranteed the integrity of the Spanish dominions ! History has few blacker or more disgraceful deeds to commemorate ; and, doubtless, the perpetration of them must have been a subject of shame to many of the brave men engaged in the undertaking, how much soever the better feelings of the majority may have been obliterated by that fatal revolutionary principle which measures the morality of all public actions by no other test but success. To the disgrace of Napoleon, it is now proved by the instructions to Murat, signed with his own hand, that these atrocious acts of perfidy were not only planned, but directly enjoined by himself.* Napoleon, however, who

39.
Napoleon improves his success, and covers the north of Spain with troops.

* On the margin of the letter of the Duke de Mahon, captain-general of Guipuscoa, requesting instructions, and fully detailing the danger, was written in the Prince of the Peace's own hand—"Let the governor give up the place, since he has not the means of resisting ; but let him do so in an amicable manner, as has been done in other places where there were even fewer reasons or grounds for excuse than in the case of San Sebastian."--*March 3, 1808 ; TORENO, i. 58.* The general answer returned by the Prince of the Peace to the repeated demands which he received from the north, for instructions how to act, had previously been—"Receive the French well ; they are our allies ; they come to us as friends."--*HARDENBERG, x. 122.*

† "Les instructions à Murat étaient à réunir 600,000 rations de biscuit déjà fabriquées à Bayonne, occuper sur-le-champ la citadelle de Pampelune, les forts

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never inquired into the means, provided the end was favourable, was overjoyed at this easy acquisition of the keys of Spain, and was led from it to discard all fears of a serious rupture in the course of his projected changes of dynasty in the Peninsula. With his accustomed vigour, he instantly prepared to make the most of his extraordinary good fortune in these important conquests. Fresh troops were quickly poured into the newly-acquired fortresses; their ramparts were armed, their ditches scoured, their arsenals filled; the monks in them were all turned adrift, and the monasteries converted into barracks. Several millions of biscuits were baked in the frontier towns of France, and speedily stored in their extensive magazines. The whole country from the Bidassoa to the Douro was covered with armed men; the Spanish authorities in all the towns were supplanted by French ones; and before a single shot had yet been fired, or one angry note interchanged between the cabinets, the whole of Spain, north of the Ebro, had been already wrested from the crown of Castile.^{1*}

How deeply soever Godoy may have been implicated, by long-established intimacy and recent lures, in the meshes of French diplomacy, he could not any longer remain blind to the evident tendency of the designs of

¹ Foy, iii.
35, 87, 89.
Tor. i. 59,
60. South.
i. 195, 205.
Lond. i. 57,
60.

de Barcelone, la place de St Sébastien; donner aux commandants espagnols, pour raison de cette occupation, la règle ordinaire d'assurer ses derrières quand on marche en avant, même en pays ami; tenir toutes les troupes bien ensemble, comme en approchant de l'ennemi; ne pas accepter de communication avec la cour d'Espagne, sans en avoir l'ordre formel; ne répondre à aucune lettre du Prince de la Paix; dire, si on était interrogé de manière à ne pouvoir se taire, que les troupes françaises entraient en Espagne pour un but connu de Napoléon seul, but certainement avantageux à la cause de l'Espagne et de la France; prononcer vaguement les mots de Cadix, de Gibraltar; annoncer aux provinces Basques que leurs privilèges seraient respectés; recommander les relations les plus fraternelles avec le généreux peuple Espagnol; ne jamais mêler à toutes ces protestations d'amitié d'autre nom que celui du peuple Espagnol, et ne jamais parler ni du Roi Charles IV., ni de son gouvernement.—*Instructions of NAPOLEON to MURAT, 20th February 1808; THIERS, Consulat et l'Empire, viii. 464, 465.*

* General Foy, though a liberal writer, and of the Napoleon school, gives a full detail, much to his credit, of these disgraceful transactions, and draws a veil over none of the dishonourable deeds by which they were accomplished.—

Napoleon. The seizure of Pampeluna first drew the veil in part from his eyes; the successive captures of Barcelona, Figueras, and San Sebastian, next tore it asunder; finally, the proclamation of Junot, on the 1st February, at once dashed to the earth all his hopes of national or individual aggrandisement. The portentous announcement that Junot was to administer the affairs of Portugal in its *whole extent*, in the name of the Emperor, evinced clearly that all the provisions in the treaty of Fontainebleau in favour either of the Spanish family, who had ceded the throne of Tuscany, or of the Prince of the Peace individually, were blown to the winds. The private correspondence of that ambitious statesman, accordingly, at this period, evinces the utmost uneasiness regarding the designs of France.* But the uncertainty of which he so bitterly complained was of short duration. A requisition by Napoleon for the removal of the Spanish fleet to Toulon, which the cabinet of Madrid were weak enough to comply with, though the rapid succession of events prevented its execution, was soon followed by a formal demand of all Spain to the north of the Ebro, to be incorporated with the French monarchy. In return, he offered to cede to the Spanish monarchy his newly-acquired realm of Portugal;¹ but it was readily foreseen that the proposal would prove entirely elusory,

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1808.

40.

The Prince
of the Peace
begins to
see through
the real
designs of
Napoleon.

Feb. 6.

Feb. 27.

¹ Thib. vi.
312, 313.Hard. x.
122, 123.Tor. i. 58,
59. Foy, iii.
109.

See Foy, iii. 75, 85. This is the true and honourable spirit of history, and withal the most politic, for it gives double weight to the defence of his country on other points when undertaken by such a champion.

* On 9th February, Godoy wrote to his agent Isquierdo at Paris the following secret despatch:—"I receive no news: I live in uncertainty: *the treaty is already a dead letter*; this kingdom is covered with troops; the harbours of Portugal are about to be occupied by them; Junot governs *the whole* of that country. We have just received a demand for the remainder of our fleets to co-operate with the French, which must be complied with. Everything is uncertainty, intrigue, and distrust; public opinion is divided; the heir-apparent to the throne was lately involved in a treasonable conspiracy; the French troops live at free quarters on the country; the people are exhausted by their requisitions. You yourself have been to little purpose at Paris; the ambassador there is useless. What is to come of all this? What will be the end of this uncertainty? If you know anything, for God's sake let me know it: anything is better than this uncertainty."—GODOY to ISQUIERDO, 9th February 1808; THIBAudeau, vi. 311, 313.

His secret
despatch to
Isquierdo at
this period.

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as Junot had taken possession of the whole country in the name of Napoleon, and it was not to be supposed he would ever relinquish his grasp of a monarchy so important in his maritime designs against Great Britain.*

41.

And is at length made fully aware of them.

Possession of Spain to the north of the Ebro, including, of course, Catalonia, Navarre, the whole frontier fortresses, and the passes through the Pyrenees, was, in a military point of view, possession of Spain itself: not a fort existed to arrest the French between that river and the capital. The intelligence communicated by Isquierdo, the Spanish ambassador at Paris, revealed the alarming fact, that the title of Emperor of the *Indies* was to be given to Ferdinand, and that Napoleon continually reverted to the dependence of the tranquillity of France on the succession to the crown of *Spain*. In the course of the conferences, the Spanish diplomatist had penetrated the real secret, and distinctly warned the Prince of the Peace that the total dethronement of the house of Bourbon was resolved on. The approach of the Queen of Etruria to Madrid at this juncture, who had been forced to renounce one throne by the French Emperor, and since insidiously deprived of the compensation promised her in Portugal, enhanced the general embarrassments; and at length the arrival of Murat at Burgos, where he was received with admiration, with the title of "Lieutenant of the Emperor," and an immense staff, both civil and military, left no room for doubt that Napoleon was determined to appropriate to himself the whole Peninsula. To co-operate in this design, Junot received the most peremptory orders to repress any attempt at

March 11.

March 15.

Napoleon demands the cession of the provinces to the north of the Ebro.

* The proposal for the cession of the provinces north of the Ebro was brought to Madrid by Isquierdo, in the form of a *procès-verbal* of the import of long conferences held at Paris between himself, Duroc, and Talleyrand. It bore:—"The Emperor is desirous of exchanging Portugal for the Spanish provinces to the north of the Ebro, to avoid the inconvenience of a military road across Castile. A new treaty, offensive and defensive, appears necessary to bind Spain more closely to the Continental System. The repose of his empire requires that the *succession to the crown of Castile* should be fixed in an

insurrection in Portugal, with the utmost sternness, to imitate in that respect the terrible manner in which the Emperor had repressed the insurrection at Pavia, Verona, and Cano, to disband the Portuguese army, and keep a sharp eye on the Spanish divisions in Portugal, and remove them as far as possible from the frontier of the two kingdoms.* Meanwhile Isquierdo, who had penetrated the Emperor's deep-laid designs against Spain, received peremptory and menacing orders to quit Paris without delay, which he did the very next day, bearing with him the most alarming intelligence of the designs of the French.¹

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¹ Thiers, viii. 476, 478. Tor. i. 60, 63. Foy, iii. 108, 110. Thib. vi. 313.

In this extremity the Prince of Peace, roused to more manly feelings by the near approach of danger, both to the monarchy and his own person, recalled a letter which he had despatched to Paris, consenting to the cession of the provinces north of the Ebro, and counselled the King to imitate the example of the Prince Regent of Portugal, and depart for Seville, with a view to embark for America. Preparations were immediately made for the journey. The Guards were assembled at Aranjuez, then the royal residence; thirty pieces of cannon were brought from Segovia, and messengers despatched to Gibraltar to bespeak an asylum for the fugitive monarch within its impregnable walls. Meanwhile Napoleon, keeping up to the last his detestable system of hypocrisy, sent the King a present of twelve beautiful horses, with a letter announcing "his approaching visit to his friend and ally the King of Spain, in order to cement their friendship by personal intercourse, and arrange the affairs of the Peninsula without the restraint of diplomatic forms;" while the passage of the Bidassoa

42.
He prepares the flight of the court to Seville. March 15.

March 16.

March 17.

irrevocable manner. His Majesty is willing to grant permission to the King to bear the title of *Emperor of the Indies*, and to give his niece in marriage to the Prince of Asturias." Such was the *procès-verbal*; but Isquierdo, says Foy, was too acute a diplomatist not to see that Napoleon was deceiving all the world; and that he was bent upon getting the entire command of the whole Peninsula, and disposing of it at his pleasure.—Foy, iii. 109; and ISQUIERDO'S *Despatch to GODOY*, 24th March 1808; SAVARY, iii. 142.

* THIERS, *Consulat et l'Empire*, viii. 466.

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¹ Tor. i. 60,
64. Thib. vi.
313, 318.
Foy, iii.
108, 113.
Lond. i. 64.
Thiers, viii.
471, 474.

by six thousand of the Imperial Guard, the formation of a new French army, nineteen thousand strong, in Biscay, under Marshal Bessières, and the increase of the forces in Catalonia to fifteen thousand men, told but too clearly that if he did arrive, it would be with the pomp and authority of a conqueror. At the same time, Napoleon, who suspected that a flight to America by the royal family might be in contemplation, sent secret orders in cipher to Admiral Rosilly, who had the command of the French squadron at Cadiz, "to take such a position, that he might, in the event of such an attempt being made, succeed in preventing it, and at once arrest the whole royal family." With truth does M. Thiers, who has revealed these atrocious proceedings, add that, judged by the rules of common morality, they must for ever wither the reputation of their author.¹*

43.
Tumult at
Aranjuez.

The Prince of Asturias was offered by the King either to share the flight of the royal family, or remain at home with the title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom. He at first preferred the former alternative, though his confidants, not yet convinced that the total overthrow of the dynasty was determined on by Napoleon, dissuaded him from the step, and strongly recommended him to throw himself into the arms of the Emperor. Meanwhile the preparations for a journey by the court, and certain vague rumours of their approaching departure from the kingdom, which had transpired, collected an unusual crowd to Aranjuez, and increased to the very highest pitch the anxiety of the people at Madrid, who, notwithstanding the ignorance in which they were kept, had still learned with dismay the seizure of the frontier fortresses, and occupation of the northern provinces by the French troops. The French ambassador openly and loudly condemned

* "Assurément, si on jugeait ces actes d'après la morale ordinaire qui rend sacrée la propriété d'autrui, *il faudrait les flétrir à jamais*, comme on flétrit ceux du criminel qui a touché au bien qui ne lui appartient point; et même en les jugeant d'après des principes différents, on ne peut que leur infliger un blâme sévère."—THIERS, *Consulat et l'Empire*, viii. 474.

the projected departure to the south, as uncalled for, imprudent, and calculated only to disturb the existing state of amity between the two nations; while Murat at Burgos issued a proclamation, which arrived at this period at the capital, in which he enjoined his soldiers "to treat the Spaniards, a nation estimable in so many respects, as they would treat their French compatriots, as the Emperor wished nothing but happiness and felicity to Spain." Still the general effervescence continued, and the King, to calm it, issued a proclamation, in which he earnestly counselled peace and submission—an advice which had a precisely opposite effect.¹

As the period of departure approached, the reluctance of Ferdinand to accompany the fugitive monarch became hourly stronger, and his friends gave out that he was resolved to remain at home and stand by his country; a resolution which was loudly applauded by the people, who regarded him as the only hope of the nation, and were worked up to a pitch of perfect fury against the Prince of the Peace, whom they regarded as, more than he really was, the author of all the public calamities. A casual expression which dropped from Ferdinand on the morning of the 17th, "This night the court sets out, but I will not accompany them," increased the general excitement, by spreading the belief that the King might possibly be reluctantly torn away from the kingdom of his fathers. At length, when the royal carriages drew up to the door of the palace, and preparations for an immediate departure were made, matters came to a crisis. The people rose in tumultuous masses; a large body took post at the palace, cut the traces of the carriages, and put an entire stop to the intended journey; while a furious mob, composed in great part of disbanded soldiers, surrounded the hotel of the Prince of the Peace, from whose guards they experienced no resistance, forced open the doors, ransacked the most private apartments in searching for the object of their indignation, who, however, for the time escaped.²

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March 16.
¹ Tor. i. 60.
Foy, iii.
111, 113.
Thib. vi.
321, 322.

44.
Overthrow
of the Prince
of the Peace.
March 17.

² Tor. i. 69,
75. Foy, iii.
113, 117.
Thib. vi.
321, 322.
Lond. i. 64,
65.

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LII.

1808.

Still, however, observing some moderation in their excesses, they brought the Princess, with all the respect due to her rank, to the royal palace.*

45.
Fall of the
Prince of
the Peace.
March 18.

In the first moment of alarm, the Prince of the Peace, who was at breakfast at the time, had escaped by a back passage with a single roll, which was lying on the table, in his hand, and, flying up to the garrets, hid himself under a quantity of mats until the first violence of the tumult had subsided. To appease the people, the King issued a decree on the following morning, by which he was deprived of his functions as generalissimo and high-admiral, and banished from court, with liberty only to choose his place of retreat. This measure, however, was far from restoring general tranquillity; the violence of the public feeling was manifested by the seizure of Don Diego Godoy, a relation of the Prince, who was conducted with every mark of ignominy by his own troop of dragoons to his barracks; and secret information was received that a new and more serious tumult was preparing for the succeeding night, having for its object a more important change than the overthrow of the ruling favourite. At the same time intelligence arrived that the Guards, when sounded as to whether they would repel an attack upon the palace, answered, "that the Prince of Asturias could alone insure the public safety;" and that prince waited on the King, and offered, by sending the officers of his household through the crowd, to disperse the assemblage; a proposal which was gladly accepted, but necessarily led to the suspicion that he who could so easily appease, had not been a stranger to the origin of the tumult.¹

¹ Lond. i. 65,
66. Tor. i.
73, 77. Nell.
15, 20.

* The tumult at the Prince of the Peace's palace first commenced from the mob recognising in the person of a veiled lady, who left the palace at dusk on the evening of the 17th, surrounded by the guards, Dona Pepa Tudo, who had so long been the mistress of the favourite. His marriage with the niece of the King no more disturbed their relation than either the one or the other excited any jealousy in the breast of the Queen, whose criminal partiality had been the sole cause of his original elevation; and the tumult at Aranjuez found them *both* residing quietly under the same roof.—TORENO, i. 74; FOY, iii. 116. This is a clear proof that, in some cases at least, the ardour of the sun in a warm climate does not inflame the passion of the green-eyed monster.

The night passed quietly over, but next morning, at ten o'clock, a frightful disturbance arose in consequence of the discovery of Godoy in his own palace. This unhappy victim of popular fury had remained for thirty-six hours undiscovered in his place of concealment ; but at length the pangs of thirst became so intolerable as to overcome the fear of death, and he ventured down stairs to get a glass of water. He was recognised by a Walloon sentinel at the foot of the steps, who immediately gave the alarm. A crowd instantly collected ; he was seized by a furious multitude, and with difficulty rescued from instant death by some guards who collected around him, and, at the imminent risk of their own lives, dragged him, suspended from their saddles almost in the air, covered with contusions and half dead with terror, at a rapid pace across the Place San Antonio to the nearest barrack, amidst the most dreadful cries and imprecations. His feet were crushed by the horses' hoofs, his thigh pierced by a deep wound, and one eye almost torn from its socket. He was thrown on a bed of straw—the same, by a singular coincidence, which he had occupied as a private in the Royal Guard, before his extraordinary and almost fabulous rise commenced. Prevented from wreaking their vengeance on the chief object of their hatred, the mob divided into separate parties, and, traversing the streets in different directions, sacked and levelled with the ground the houses of the principal friends and dependants of Godoy. At length Ferdinand, to whom all eyes were now turned as the only person capable of arresting the public disorders, at the earnest entreaty of the King and Queen—whose anxiety, amidst all the perils with which they were themselves surrounded, was chiefly for the life of their fallen favourite—flew to the prison at the head of his guards, and prevailed on the menacing mob by which it was surrounded to retire. “Are you yet king?” inquired the Prince of the Peace, when Ferdinand first presented himself before him. “Not as yet,

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

46.
Abdication
of Charles
IV.
March 19.

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LII.

1808.

¹ Lond. i. 65,
66. Tor. i.
73, 79. Fox,
iii. 118, 122.
Nell. i. 15,
20. Thib. vi.
321, 323.
Thiers, viii.
511.

but I shall soon be so." In effect, Charles IV., deserted by the whole court, overwhelmed by the opprobrium heaped on his obnoxious minister, unable to trust his own guards, and in hourly apprehension for the life, not only of Godoy, but of himself and the Queen, deemed a resignation of the crown the only mode of securing the personal safety of any of the three; and in the evening a proclamation appeared, in which he relinquished the throne to the Prince of Asturias.¹*

47.
Universal
joy of the
people at
these events.

The Prince was proclaimed king under the title of Ferdinand VII. on the day of his father's abdication; and this auspicious event, coupled with the fall of Godoy, diffused universal transport. All ranks and classes of the people shared in it: the surrender of the frontier forces, the hundred thousand men in the northern provinces, the approach of Napoleon with his Guards, were forgotten, now that the traitors who, it was thought, had betrayed the nation, were fallen: the houses in Madrid were decorated during the day with flowers and green boughs; at night a vast illumination burst forth spontaneously in every part of the city. Ferdinand VII. was hailed with enthusiastic applause, as the saviour of his country, whenever he appeared in public; while the public fury against the Prince of the Peace rose to such a height,² that the people in many parts of the kingdom

² Tor. i. 81,
85. Lond. i.
66. South.
i. 209, 218.
Nell. i. 21,
22.

His procla-
mation, and
secret feelings
on the sub-
ject.

* "As my habitual infirmities no longer permit me to bear the weight of the government of my kingdom, and standing in need, for the re-establishment of my health, of a milder climate and a private life, I have determined, after the most mature deliberation, to abdicate the crown in favour of my heir and well-beloved son, the Prince of Asturias, and desire that this, my free and spontaneous abdication, should be fully carried into execution in all points."—*Decree, 19th March 1808*; Fox, iii. 371. On the day following, the King informed Murat of his resignation, with full details of his reasons for so doing, but without alleging any others than those set forth in the public instrument; but on the 21st he wrote a secret despatch to Napoleon, in which he asserted—"I have only resigned in favour of my son from the force of circumstances; and when the din of arms and the clamours of my insurgent guards left me no alternative but resignation or death, which would speedily have been followed by that of the Queen, I have been forced to abdicate, and have no longer any hope but in the aid and support of my magnanimous ally, the Emperor Napoleon." On the same day he drew up a secret protest, which sets forth—"I

March 21.

destroyed the institutions which he had established for the promotion even of agriculture, manufactures, and the arts, from which nothing but unmixed good could have been anticipated.

While the Spanish people were thus abandoning themselves to transports of joy at the accession of a new monarch to the throne, Murat, at the head of the French troops, was rapidly approaching Madrid. On the 15th March, he set out at the head of the corps of Moncey, the Imperial Guard and the artillery, from Burgos, taking the road of the Somo-Sierra. On the same day, Dupont, with two divisions of his corps and the cavalry, broke up for the Guadarrama pass ; the third division of Dupont's corps remained at Valladolid to observe the Spanish troops which occupied Galicia. No sooner had these forces advanced on the road towards Madrid, than their place at Burgos was supplied by the army of reserve under Bessières. The whole body moved on by brigades, taking with them provisions for fifteen days, and fifty rounds of ball-cartridge each man ; the troops bivouacked at night with patrols set, and all the other precautions usual in an enemy's territory. They everywhere gave out that they were bound for the camp of San Roque, to act against the English, at the same time belying these pacific declarations by arresting all the Spanish soldiers and posts whom they met on the road, so as to prevent

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LII.
1808.

48.
Continued
advance of
the French
troops, and
entry of
Murat into
Madrid.
March 15.

declare that my decree of 19th March, by which I abdicated the crown in favour of my son, is an act to which I was forced, to prevent the effusion of the blood of *my beloved subjects*. It should, therefore, be regarded as null."—See both documents in Foy, iii. 392, 393; *Pièces Just.* On the other hand, the day after his abdication, Charles IV. said to the diplomatic body assembled at the Escorial—"I never performed an action in my life with more pleasure." The truth appears to be, that the abdication, in the first instance, was prompted chiefly by terror for the life of the Prince of the Peace, for whose safety throughout the royal pair manifested more solicitude than for their own concerns ; and it was an after-thought to protest against it as null, or attempt to recede from the act. Thibaudeau seems to incline to the opinion that the protest on 21st March was drawn out subsequent to its date, and after the arrival of Murat, though, doubtless, the resignation of the crown, even if suggested only by terrors for Godoy's life, cannot be considered as a voluntary deed.—See TORENO, i. 85, 86; and THIBAudeau, vi. 328.

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LII.

1808.

March 23.

any intelligence of their approach being received. In this way they passed without opposition, and almost without their advance being known, the important range of mountains which separates Old from New Castile ; and Murat, having received intelligence at Beytrajo, on their southern side, of the events at Aranjuez, redoubled his speed, entered Madrid at the head of the cavalry and Imperial Guard and a brilliant staff on the day following, and took up his quarters in the hotel of the Prince of the Peace. This formidable apparition excited much less attention than it would otherwise have done, in consequence of all

March 24.

minds being intent on the preparations for Ferdinand VII. on the following day making his public entry into the capital, and of the mean look of the French soldiers, who, with the exception of the magnificent Imperial Guard, presented a very despicable appearance, widely different from the stalwart peasantry who gazed on their array. They had yet to learn the difference between disciplined conscripts and an undisciplined mob. Ferdinand next day came in accordingly, accompanied by two hundred thousand citizens of all ranks, in carriages, on foot, and horseback, who had gone out to welcome their sovereign ; and Murat, who was an eye-witness to the universal transports which his presence occasioned, failed not instantly to write off to Napoleon intelligence of what he had seen, with many observations on the probable effect of so popular a prince permanently retaining the supreme direction of affairs.¹

¹ Lond. i. 67, 68. South. i. 219, 225. Foy, iii. 128, 130. Tor. i. 93, 97. Thib. vi. 329. Thiers, viii. 483.

49. Murat declines to recognise Ferdinand, and takes military possession of Madrid.

The first care of Ferdinand, after he ascended the throne, was to transmit to Napoleon a full account of the transactions at Aranjuez, according to his version of the affair ; and he anxiously awaited the answer which was to be received from the supreme arbiter of his fate. In the interim, however, he experienced from the French authorities the utmost reserve ; and when he made a visit to Murat, and was announced as King of Spain, he had the mortification of being obliged to return, not only

without any of the honours due to his rank, but without having had a single word addressed to him by that officer or his attendants.* As, however, it was of the utmost importance to the new sovereign that he should be recognised by the French Emperor—and his situation without such countenance was not only precarious but full of danger—no pains were spared to conciliate his favour, and win the good-will of the French generals in Madrid. Flattery, caresses, obsequious obedience to every demand, were all tried, but in vain. Murat, aware of the secret designs of his brother-in-law on the throne of Spain, was careful to avoid everything which could have the semblance even of recognising Ferdinand's title to the throne. In truth, he nourished secret hopes of it for himself; and the very day after his arrival wrote accordingly to the Emperor, that if he chose it, nothing was easier than to supplant the Bourbon dynasty by "*a prince of his house*."† Meanwhile Charles IV. and the Queen, more and more alarmed for the safety of their fallen favourite, did not let a day pass without reiterating their entreaties to Murat to take him under his protection, and now openly represented the resignation as a compulsory act; while that general, careful above all to advance the interests of his master, took military possession of the capital, occupied and fortified the Retiro,¹ reviewed all his

¹ Thiers, viii. 185.
Foy, i. 140.
Thib. vi.
332. Tor.
i. 108, 109.

* "The Queen of Etruria had, unknown to Murat, arranged matters for an interview between him and Ferdinand VII., and accordingly he made his appearance and was announced as *King of Spain*, when the French general was paying a visit to the Ex-Queen of Tuscany. Murat stood up when he entered the room, but did not advance a step to meet him: Ferdinand paused at his unexpected reserve; and the Queen, to put an end to so awkward a scene, sat down to the piano and began to play. Neither said a word: at length Ferdinand mechanically drew near to his sister, and stood beside the instrument; Murat never stirred, and soon after, bowing to the Queen, retired, without having taken any further notice of the embarrassed monarch."—Foy, iii. 140, note.

† "Je croyais, Sire," écrivait-il à Napoléon, 'après tant d'années de services et de dévouement, avoir mérité votre confiance, et, revêtu du commandement de vos troupes, devoir connaître à quelles fins elles allaient être employées. Je vous en supplie, donnez-moi des instructions. Quelles qu'elles soient, elles seront exécutées. Voulez-vous renverser Godoy, faire régner Ferdinand, rien

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

50.
General acquiescence
in all the
demands of
the French.

March 31.

forces on the outskirts of the town, and nominated General Grouchy governor of Madrid.

Everything asked by the French authorities was instantly granted. All their requisitions for the support, clothing, or pay of the troops, were carefully complied with; and even the ungracious demand for the sword of Francis I., which had hung in the royal armoury ever since it had been taken in the battle of Pavia, was also yielded, from the desire of Ferdinand to conciliate his much-dreaded ally.* A hint was next given that the journey of DON CARLOS, Ferdinand's brother, destined to celebrity in future times, to receive the Emperor on the frontiers of the kingdom, would be very acceptable: this, too, was instantly acquiesced in, and preparations were made for his departure. The French troops were everywhere received with acclamations; it was the universal belief that they were come to place Ferdinand on the throne, and terminate the odious rule of the Prince of the Peace. Encouraged by such marks of compliance, Beaumont then insinuated that it would have the best effect upon the future relations of the two potentates, if Ferdinand himself were to go at least as far as Burgos to receive his august guest, to throw himself into his arms, and ask his protection, friendship, and alliance. But the advisers of the Spanish monarch were startled at this demand, especially so soon after the perfidious seizure of

n'est plus facile. Un mot de votre bouche suffira. Voulez-vous changer la dynastie des Bourbons, régénérer l'Espagne *en lui donnant l'un des princes de votre maison*, rien n'est plus facile encore. Votre volonté sera reçue comme celle de la Providence."—MURAT to NAPOLEON, *March 26, 1808*. Napoleon answered—"Quand je vous prescrais de marcher militairement, de tenir vos divisions bien rassemblées et à distance de combat, de les pourvoir abondamment pour qu'elles ne commettent aucun désordre, d'éviter toute collision, de ne prendre aucune part aux divisions de la cour d'Espagne, et de me renvoyer les questions qu'elle pourra vous adresser, ne sont-ce pas là des instructions? *Le reste ne vous regarde pas*, et, si je ne vous dis rien, c'est que vous ne devez rien savoir."—NAPOLEON to MURAT, *4th April 1808*.—THIERS, *Consulat et l'Empire*, viii. 485, 486.

* "It was brought in state from the Armoria Real to the palace of Murat by the Count Altemion. 'It could not,' said he, 'be given up to more worthy hands than those of the illustrious general formed in the school of the hero of the age.'"—FOR, iii. 142.

the fortresses ; and the inhabitants of Madrid, grievously offended at the coldness of the French authorities to their beloved prince, and the unauthorised intrusion of their troops into the capital, ere long became exasperated at their imperious allies. Meanwhile Murat, anxious above everything to check the growing enthusiasm in favour of Ferdinand, which seemed equally hostile to the views of his imperial master and those of himself, recommended to the old king to represent his abdication as a forced act, and held out hopes, which were eagerly embraced, of his restoration to the throne by the influence or force of Napoleon. He promised to forward the protest against the resignation without delay to the Emperor, whom he represented as strongly inclined to support the cause of the old sovereigns, and protect not only them, but the Prince of the Peace, whose unpopularity had involved them in his fall.¹

Napoleon received the account of the events at Aranjuez on the night of the 26th March at Paris. He instantly took his final resolution, and next morning offered the crown of Spain to his brother Louis. His letter to that prince still exists, and affords decisive evidence of his views on that monarchy even at that early period, and of the profound dissimulation as well as thorough perfidy by which his subsequent conduct, both to Ferdinand and Charles IV., was characterised.* Louis,

CHAP.
LII.
1808.

¹ Lond. i. 69,
70. Foy, i.
140, 142.
Thib. vi.
332. Tor. i.
109. Thiers,
viii. 524,
525, 526.

51.
Napoleon
offers the
crown of
Spain to
Louis
Bonaparte,
who declines
it, and
Savary is
sent to
Madrid.

* Napoleon's letter to his brother Louis was in these terms :—" 27th March 1808—The King of Spain has just abdicated ; the Prince of the Peace has been imprisoned ; insurrectionary movements have shown themselves at Madrid. At that instant our troops were still forty leagues distant, but on the 23d Murat must have entered that capital at the head of forty thousand men. The people demand me, with loud cries, to fix their destinies. Being convinced that I shall never be able to conclude a solid peace with England till I have caused a great movement on the Continent, I have resolved to put a French prince on the throne of Spain. In this state of affairs, I have turned my eyes on you for the throne of Spain. Say at once what is your opinion on that subject, You must be aware that this plan is yet in embryo ; and that, although I have 100,000 men in Spain, yet, according to circumstances, I may either advance directly to my object, in which case everything will be concluded in a fortnight, or be more circumspect in my advances, and the final result will appear only after several months' operations. Answer categorically—if I declare you King of

Napoleon's
letter to his
brother Louis
to that effect.

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1808.

however, was not deceived by the specious offer thus held out to him : he had felt on the throne of Holland the chains of servitude, and the responsibility of command, and he was thinking rather of resigning his onerous charge than accepting another still more burdensome : he therefore refused. Some time before, Napoleon had had a long conversation with Isquierdo at St Cloud as to the state of public opinion in the Peninsula, and the feelings with which they would regard a prince of his family, or even himself, as their sovereign. Isquierdo replied, "The Spaniards would accept your majesty for their sovereign with pleasure, and even enthusiasm, but only in the event of your having previously renounced the crown of France." Struck with this answer, and the confirmation it had recently received, he meditated much on the affairs of Spain ; and, without revealing to him his real designs on the Spanish crown, sent Savary to Madrid, to carry into execution his intrigues in the Spanish capital. Foreseeing that the crisis of the Peninsula was approaching, and that it was indispensable that he should get both Charles and Ferdinand into his power, he set out himself for Bayonne in the beginning of April. He had now finally made up his mind to take advantage of the dissensions of the Spanish royal family to dispossess both the claimants, and place one of his own family on the throne.¹

April 2.
¹ Sav. iii.
162. Tor. i.
100, 101.
Thib. vi.
334, 335.
Foy, iii.
142, 143.

52.
His secret
instruc-
tions, and
object of
his journey.

When Savary received his final instructions for Madrid, Napoleon said to him :—"Charles IV. has abdicated ; his son has succeeded him ; and this change has been the result of a revolution in which the Prince of the Peace has fallen, which looks as if these changes were not altogether voluntary. I was fully prepared *for some changes in Spain* ; but I think they are now taking a turn *altogether different from what I intended*. See our ambassador on the subject ; inquire especially why he could not prevent a revolution in which I shall be forced to interfere, and

Spain, can I rely on you?"—NAPOLEON to LOUIS, 27th March 1808 ; TORENO, i. 100 ; and THIBAudeau, vi. 334.

in which I shall be considered as implicated. Before recognising the son, I must be made aware of the sentiments of the father; nothing will induce me to do so till I see the resignation duly legalised, otherwise a troop of traitors may be introduced into my palace during the night, who may force me to abdicate, and overturn the state. When I made peace on the Niemen, I stipulated that, if England did not accept the mediation of Alexander, he should unite his arms to mine to constrain that power to submission. I would be weak indeed, if, having obtained that single advantage from those whom I have vanquished, I should permit the Spaniards to embroil me afresh on my weak side, and give that power much greater advantages than she had lost by the rupture with Russia. *What I fear above everything is a revolution of which I neither know the direction nor hold the threads.* Doubtless, it would be a great object to avoid a war with Spain: such a contest would be a species of sacrilege; but I would willingly incur all its hazards, if the prince who governs that state is disposed to embrace such a policy. I should thus be in the same situation with Louis XIV. when he engaged, in support of his grandson, in the War of the Succession; the same political necessity governs both cases. Had Charles IV. not resigned, and the Prince of the Peace not been overturned, we might have remained at peace, because I could rely on them; but now all is changed. But if Spain is inclined to throw itself into the opposite policy, I should not hesitate to enter the monarchy with all my forces; for that country, if ruled by a warlike prince inclined to direct against us all the resources of his nation, might perhaps succeed in displacing by his own dynasty my family on the throne of France. You see what might happen in France if I do not prevent it; it is my duty to foresee the danger, and take measures to deprive the enemy of the resources they might otherwise derive from it. If I cannot arrange with either the father or son, *I will make*

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

¹ Sav. iii.
162, 166.
Thiers, viii.
538.

a clean sweep of both; I will reassemble the Cortes, and resume the designs of Louis XIV. I am fully prepared for all that; I am about to set out for Bayonne; I will go on to Madrid, but only if it is absolutely unavoidable." His official instructions to Savary, still existing in the archives of the Louvre, set his perfidious intentions in the clearest light.^{1*}

53.

He arrives
at Madrid,
and per-
suades Fer-
dinand to
go to Bay-
onne.

No person could be better qualified than Savary to execute the ambiguous but important mission with which he was now charged. Devoted in his attachment to the Emperor; intimately acquainted with his most secret projects; active, insinuating, skilful; a perfect master of finesse and dissimulation; and wholly unscrupulous in the means employed for the execution of his purposes—he was admirably adapted for conducting that dark intrigue, which was intended, without a rupture, to terminate in the dethronement of the entire race of the Spanish house of Bourbon. In the most flagitious as well as important deeds of Napoleon's life—the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, the Russian negotiations which followed the battle of Austerlitz, and in those which succeeded the treaty of Tilsit—he had borne a conspicuous part; and his present situation at the head of the Gendarmerie d'Elite, gave him the direction of the most important part of the state police. Fully possessed of the secret

* "Les instructions étaient 'De ne pas reconnaître le fils, d'affecter pour l'autorité du père un respect religieux, de maintenir cette autorité le temps nécessaire pour s'emparer de la couronne, en se la faisant transmettre tout de suite ou plus tard, selon les circonstances; de tirer Ferdinand VII. de Madrid pour l'amener à Burgos ou à Bayonne, afin de s'assurer de sa personne, et d'en obtenir la cession de ses droits, moyennant une indemnité en Italie, telle que l'Etrurie par exemple: de s'y prendre avec ménagement, d'attirer Ferdinand à Bayonne par l'espérance de voir le litige vidé en sa faveur; mais, s'il s'obstinait, de publier brusquement la protestation de Charles IV., de déclarer que lui seul régnait en Espagne, et de traiter Ferdinand VII. en fils et en sujet rebelle.'" M. Thiers, much to his credit, fully admits the baseness of these designs,—“Les preuves existent,” says he, “et ne laissent sur ce sujet aucun doute: et moi, qui ne veux en rien ternir la gloire de Napoléon, je dirai ici la vérité comme je l'ai dite dans l'affaire du duc d'Enghien, par la loi toute simple et toute souveraine de rapporter, quand on écrit l'histoire, les faits tels qu'ils se sont passés.”—THIERS, *Consulat et l'Empire*, viii. 538, 539.

views of the Emperor, and entirely regardless of any breach of faith in carrying them into effect,* he spared neither menaces, nor flattery, nor assurances of safety, to accomplish the grand object of getting Ferdinand into the hands of his master. No sooner had he arrived at Madrid than he demanded a special audience of the King, which was immediately granted. He there declared,—"I have come at the particular desire of the Emperor solely to offer his compliments to your majesty, and to know if your sentiments in regard to France are in conformity with those of your father. If they are, the Emperor will shut his eyes to all that is past; *he will not intermeddle in the smallest particular in the internal affairs of the kingdom*, and he will instantly recognise you as King of Spain and the Indies." Murat also had an audience of Ferdinand, and made the same protestations in still more emphatic terms.^{1†} This gratifying assurance was accompanied with so many flattering expressions and such apparent cordiality, that it entirely imposed not only on Ferdinand, but on his most experienced counsellors; and Savary's entreaties that he would go at least as far as Burgos to meet the Emperor,‡ who was already near Bayonne, on the road to Madrid, were so pressing, that their reluctance to his departure from the capital was at length overcome,² and he set out

CHAP.
LII.
1808.

¹ Cevallos, 28, 29. April 10.

² Cevallos, 28, 29. *Tor.* i. 112, 113. Escoiq. 54. Savary, iii. 181, 182. Foy, iii. 145. Thiers, viii. 559.

* He admitted to the Abbé de Pradt, that his mission was, by one means or another, to get Ferdinand to Bayonne.—DE PRADT, 73.

† "Murat le vit, (Ferdinand VII.,) se garda bien de promettre à l'avance la reconnaissance de Ferdinand VII., mais déclara plusieurs fois que Napoléon n'avait que des intentions *parfaitement amicales*, qu'il ne voulait en rien *se mêler des affaires intérieures de l'Espagne*, que si ses troupes se trouvaient aux portes de Madrid au moment de la dernière révolution, *c'était un pur hasard*; mais que, l'Europe pouvant le rendre responsable de cette révolution, il était obligé de s'assurer, *avant de reconnaître le nouveau roi*, que tout s'était passé à Aranjuez légitimement et naturellement; que personne mieux que Ferdinand VII. ne saurait l'édifier complètement à ce sujet, et que la présence de ce prince, les explications qui sortiraient de sa bouche, ne pouvaient manquer de produire sur l'esprit de Napoléon un effet décisif."—THIERS, viii. 557, 558.

‡ "I asked permission," says Savary, "to accompany the king on his journey to the north, *solely for this reason* :—I had come from Bayonne to Madrid as a

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LII.

1808.

54.

Journey of
Ferdinand
to Burgos
at Savary's
earnest de-
sire.

from Madrid, in company with the French envoy, to meet his august protector.

The King was everywhere received on his route to the northern provinces with the same enthusiastic joy as at Aranjuez and Madrid ; though the simple inhabitants of Castile, not involved in the trammels of intrigue, and uninfluenced by the delusions which were practised on their superiors, beheld with undisguised anxiety the progress of their sovereign towards the French frontier. At Burgos, however, the uneasiness of the royal counsellors greatly increased ; for not only were they now surrounded by the French troops, but the Emperor had not arrived, and no advices of his having even crossed the frontier were received. The matter was warmly and anxiously debated in his council, and opinions were much divided as to the course which should be adopted ; Don Pedro Cevallos earnestly insisting that the King should go no farther, and portraying in vivid colours the evident peril with which such an inconsiderate surrender of his person into the hands of so ambitious a potentate would be attended. The other counsellors of the King were more undecided ; alleging for their public justification that it was utterly inconceivable that Napoleon should entertain any sinister designs against the person of the monarch on the throne of Spain, and thus run the risk not only of lighting up the flames of a frightful war in the Peninsula, but of placing the whole resources of its Transatlantic possessions at the disposal of the English government.¹

¹ Cevallos, 31. Foy, iii. 147. Escoiq. 44.

These, however, were not their only, not their real reasons ; in truth they had gone too far to recede. It had

common courier, as was the custom of travelling at that time in Spain. I had scarcely arrived when I was under the necessity of retracing my steps in the same fashion in order to meet the Emperor, at the same time that Ferdinand was pursuing the same route. I found it much more convenient to request leave for my carriage to join that of his majesty ; I did so, and my carriage accordingly made part of the royal cortège."—SAVARY, iii. 185, 186.—It is not credible that this was the real reason which induced Savary to accompany the King back to Burgos. Don Pedro Cevallos says, "General Savary made use of the most pressing instances to induce the King to go to meet the Emperor,

already transpired that Charles IV. had denounced the resignation of Aranjuez as a forced act, and was doing his utmost to engage the French government in his interest. They were all, with the exception of Cevallos, involved in that transaction, and they thus saw the penalties of treason menacing them in rear. The country was overrun by French troops; a national struggle in defence of Ferdinand appeared hopeless, or at least there were no preparations for it; and there seemed no safety even to their lives but in advancing rapidly, and, by early submission and adroit flattery, winning the powerful protection of the French Emperor before the partisans of the late monarch had had time to make any impression. This is the true secret of the majority of Ferdinand's counsellors advising him to go on to Bayonne, after the danger of it had become so evident as to excite tumults even in the humblest ranks of the people.¹

Cevallos, however, with honourable constancy maintained his opinion, and the ultimate determination appeared still uncertain, when Savary joined the deliberations. He protested loudly against any change in the King's plans as uncalled for and unnecessary, prejudicial alike to the honour of the French Emperor and of himself as his envoy, and likely, more than any other step which could be taken, to embroil the two kingdoms, and destroy that good understanding which was just beginning to arise between their respective monarchs. "I will let you cut off my head," said he, "if, in a quarter of an hour after the arrival of your majesty at Bayonne, he does not recognise you as the King of Spain and of the Indies. To preserve consistency, he will perhaps, in the first

alleging that such a step would appear infinitely flattering to his imperial majesty; and this he repeated so often, and in such insinuating terms, asserting, at the same time, that the Emperor might be hourly expected, that it was impossible to withhold credit from the assertion. When the day of departure was fixed, the French general 'solicited the honour of accompanying his majesty in his journey, which could in no event be prolonged beyond Burgos, according to the positive intelligence he had just received of the approach of his majesty.'"—CEVALLOS, 31.

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LII.

1808.

55.

Secret motives of his counsellors in agreeing to his continuing his journey.

¹ Foy, iii.
146, 147.

56.

Perfidious assurances of his safety given by Savary.

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

April 14.
1 Cevallos,
31, 32. Foy,
iii. 147, 149.
Escoiq. 44,
45. Sav. iii.
186, 187.
Thiers, viii.
567.

57.
At length
he prolongs
his journey
to Bayonne.

April 17.
2 Cevallos,
31, 33.
Escoiq. 52,
56. Foy, iii.
148, 150.
De Pradt,
74.

instance, address you by the title of your Highness ; but in a few minutes he will give you that of your Majesty. The moment that is done, everything is at an end ; then your majesty may instantly return to Spain." The King was in great perplexity, and it was extremely doubtful what course would be finally resolved on, when Savary again represented that the nearer they approached Napoleon the more he would become disposed in their favour, and that, by going forward to Bayonne, their suspense would be terminated two days sooner than it otherwise would.¹

These words were decisive : the King was surrounded by eight thousand of the French troops, without a single guard of his own. The earnest manner and apparent sincerity of Savary disarmed suspicion. Even if it had still existed, resistance was hardly possible where there was not a battalion to support it ; and the fatal resolution to continue the journey to Bayonne was taken almost from necessity, although the people were so alive to the danger that they everywhere manifested the utmost repugnance to the journey being continued, and rose at Vitoria in menacing crowds to prevent it.* At that place a faithful counsellor of the King, Don Mariano de Urquijo, arrived from Bilbao, and not only laid before him a memoir, distinctly foretelling the danger which awaited him from the French Emperor, but suggested a plan by which escape in disguise was still possible, and mentioned that both the captain-general of Biscay and a faithful battalion would be at hand at Mondragon to conduct him to Durango, and from thence to the fortified town of Bilbao. Hervax repeated the same advice : the chief of the custom-house tendered two thousand of his officers to protect his majesty :² the Duke of Mahon, governor of Guipuscoa, offered to pledge his head that he should escape safely

* "Tribuni et militis, monendo, suadendo, et quanto longius absceidetur ; apertiore custodiâ, postremo gnarum necessitatis in urbem traxere."—TACITUS, *Annal.* The arts of tyranny are the same in all ages.

into Aragon, and to accompany him in his flight, observing that it should never be said that a great-grandson of the brave Crillon was wanting in the hour of need to a descendant of Henry IV.

So many and such concurring efforts would probably have diverted the King from his design, were it not that at that very moment Savary, who had gone on to Bayonne, and seen the Emperor, returned, bringing a letter from Napoleon himself to Ferdinand, dated from that town only two days before. This letter was couched in such encouraging terms, and held out such flattering though equivocal assurances of an immediate recognition, which were strongly repeated by Savary on his word of honour, that it relieved Ferdinand's counsellors of all their perplexities; and it was finally resolved to continue the journey without delay to Bayonne.* It is now known that this resolution was not the cause of the catastrophe which followed. Ferdinand in reality had no alternative; he was surrounded by French troops, and they had distinct orders to arrest him, and bring him a prisoner to

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

58.

Letter from Napoleon, which determines his hesitation.

* Napoleon said in this letter,—“The affair of Aranjuez took place when I was occupied with the concerns of the north. I am not in a situation to form an opinion concerning it, nor of the conduct of the Prince of the Peace; but what I am clear about is, that it is dangerous for kings to accustom their subjects to the shedding of blood, and to taking justice into their own hands. The King has no longer any friends. Your highness will have none, if ever you prove unfortunate. The people willingly take vengeance for the homage which they in general pay us. As to the abdication of Charles IV., it took place at a moment when our armies covered Spain; and, in the eyes of Europe and posterity, I shall appear to have sent my troops for no other purpose but to precipitate from the throne my friend and ally. As a neighbouring sovereign, I am called on to inquire into, before I recognise, that abdication. I declare to your royal highness, and to the whole world, that if the abdication of King Charles was really voluntary, if he was not constrained to it by the revolt and insurrection of Aranjuez, *I will, without hesitation and at once, recognise you as King of Spain.* I desire much to converse with you on this subject. The circumspection which, for some months, I have employed in these affairs, should induce you to rely with the more confidence on me, if, in your turn, factions of any sort should disturb you on the throne. Your royal highness has now my whole thoughts. You see that I vacillate between different ideas, and have need to be fixed. You may, however, rest assured, that, in any event, I shall conduct myself towards you as I have done towards your father. Rely on my desire to reconcile everything, and on my wish to find occasion to give you proofs of my affection and perfect esteem.”—NAPOLEON to FERDINAND, Bayonne, April 16, 1808.—When he

Guarded but deceitful expressions in Napoleon's letter.

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LII.

1808.

April 18.

Bayonne, if he proved refractory.* When the Duke of Mahon wished still to remonstrate, Escoiquiz, who entirely directed the King, interrupted him by the words—
 “The affair is settled; to-morrow we set out for Bayonne; we have received all the assurances which we could desire.” Still the public anxiety continued; and when the horses came to the door the following morning, a vast crowd assembled, and cut the traces. A proclamation was immediately issued to calm the general effervescence, in which the King declared, “that he was assured of the constant and sincere friendship of the Emperor of France, and that, in a few days, the people would return thanks to God for the prudence which dictated the temporary absence which gave them so much disquietude.” Upon this resistance ceased, and the carriage, surrounded by a mournful and submissive, but still unconvinced crowd, took its departure, guarded by the French division of Verdier. At Vitoria it was surrounded by the superb squadrons of the Imperial Guard, and Ferdinand set out at the gallop in state, a real prisoner in the hands of his perfidious ally. Two days afterwards he crossed the Bidassoa, and, proceeding to Bayonne, finally committed himself to the honour of the French Emperor.¹ In former days, other kings, won by the arts of the Roman

April 21.
¹Tor. i. 115,
 119. Ceval-
 los, 31, 33.
 Escoiq. 52,
 56. Foy, iii.
 148, 151.
 Thib. vi.
 345, 351.
 De Pradt,
 74. Sav. iii.
 210, 214.
 Thiers, viii.
 581.

put this insidious epistle into Savary's hands, Napoleon said to him,—“If the Prince of Asturias had followed wise counsels, I should have found him here; but from what you tell me, I suppose he conceived apprehensions from the preparations of the Grand-duke of Berg, (Murat.) Return, and give him this letter from me; allow him to make his reflections on it. You have no need of finesse; he is more interested in it than I am. Let him do as he pleases. According to your answer or your silence, I shall take my line, and also adopt such measures as may *prevent him from returning elsewhere except to his father*. There is the fruit of bad counsels. Here is a prince who *perhaps will cease to reign in a few days, or induce a war between France and Spain*.” At the same time he wrote to Murat to save the life of the Prince of the Peace, but to send him immediately to Bayonne.—SAVARY, iii. 200, 212, 213.

* “Napoléon ordonna sur-le-champ à Murat ainsi qu'au maréchal Bessièrès de ne pas hésiter, et, sur un simple avis du Général Savary, *de faire arrêter le Prince des Asturies*, en publiant du même coup la protestation de Charles IV., en déclarant que celui-ci régnait seul, et que son *fils n'était qu'un usurpateur qui avait provoqué la révolution d'Aranjuez pour s'emparer du trône*.”—THIERS, viii. 572, 573.

Emperors, had done the same, and had experienced the fate which awaited Ferdinand. Already was the French Revolution terminating in the same dark atrocities as the Roman.* After having rivalled the glory of Cæsar, Napoleon had descended to the arts of Tiberius!

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1808.

Upon his departure from Madrid, Ferdinand had intrusted the government to a regency, of which Don Antonio, uncle to Ferdinand, was the head. Murat, however, was the real centre of authority: the presence of thirty thousand French troops gave him an influence which was irresistible. No sooner had the King left the capital than he insisted that the Prince of the Peace should be immediately given up to him. Don Antonio refused to do so, until he received authority from Ferdinand, to whom he instantly despatched a courier for instructions. Meanwhile the French general continued to insist for the delivery of the important prisoner, threatening, at the same time, to put to the sword, in case of refusal, the six hundred provincial guards intrusted with his custody. At length authority arrived from the King for his surrender, which the Infant communicated to the officer in command of the Guards, with the simple observation, "that on the surrender of Godoy depended the preservation of the crown of Spain to his nephew." On the same day Godoy set out from Madrid under a strong French escort, and six days afterwards arrived at Bayonne. Meanwhile Murat harassed the regency with repeated and vexatious demands, apparently prompted by no other motive than to disgust them with the cares of an unsubstantial command, and accustom the people to regard the French headquarters as the centre from which all real authority emanated. Soon after he repaired in person to the Escorial, and had long and repeated conferences with Charles IV. and the old Queen.

59.
Godoy,
Charles IV.,
and the
Queen, are
sent by
Murat to
Bayonne.

April 20.

April 26.

* "Reges infestos suspectosque, comminationibus magis quam querelis, vi compressit. Quosdam, per blanditias atque promissa extractos ad se, non remisit—ut Marobodicum Germanum, Rheuscopoem Thracem, Archelaum Cappadocem, cujus etiam regnum in formam provinciæ redegit."—SÆTONTIUS' "*Tiberius*," i. 474. *Valpy's Classics*.

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LII.

1808.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
iii. § 45,
note.

April 30.

² *Tor.* i.
124, 127.
Foy, iii.
152, 155.
Thib. vi.
353, 354.
Hard. x.
142, 145.60.
Great em-
barrassment
experienced
by Napoleon
in regard to
the Penin-
sular affairs.

The result of their deliberations soon appeared in the transmission to Don Antonio of the ante-dated and secret state paper, already noticed,¹ in which the King protested against his abdication as brought about by constraint and intimidation; and by the earnest advice of Murat, he set out immediately after, in company with the Queen, surrounded by French guards, for Bayonne, to lay his grievances at the feet of Napoleon, where he arrived four days after his fallen favourite. Thus did the French Emperor, by the influence of his name, the terrors of his armies, and the astuteness of his diplomatists, succeed in inducing the leaders of all the parties which distracted Spain, including the late and present sovereign, to place their persons at his disposal; while, at the same time, the communications on his part which brought about this extraordinary result were managed with such address, and enveloped in such mystery, that not only could none of them boast of possessing a distinct pledge of what he intended to do, but all had reason to hope that the result would prove entirely conformable to their interests.²

Meanwhile Napoleon, though possessed of such extraordinary influence, and invested with almost absolute power over the affairs of Spain and Portugal, and the interests of the crowned heads which they contained, was extremely embarrassed how to act. Not that he swerved in the slightest degree from his intention of making, as he himself said, a "clean sweep of them," (*maison nette*,) but that he perceived, in the clearest light, the abyss on the edge of which he was placed, and anticipated, with just and sagacious foresight, the incalculable consequences which might result from the lighting of the flames of a national war in the Peninsula. Through all the weakness and submission of the last century, he still discerned the traces of energy and resolution in the Spanish character. The timidity of its foreign conduct, the abuses of its internal administration, he justly ascribed to the corruption of the nobles, or the imbecility of the court. His

generals had transmitted daily accounts of the alarming excitement which seemed to prevail, especially among the lower classes of the community; and he rightly concluded that he would be involved in inextricable embarrassment if, on a side where he had so long been entirely secure, there should arise a contest animated by the indignant feelings of a nation hitherto a stranger to revolutionary passions. M. de Tournon, a secret agent whom he employed at Madrid, from a well-founded distrust of Murat's political capacity, and a thorough perception of his ambitious views on the Spanish crown, transmitted at this critical juncture detailed and graphic accounts of the enthusiasm of the people in favour of Ferdinand VII., of the extreme jealousy which prevailed of French interference, and of the great danger of lighting up a national war in Spain, where political passions had not yet worn themselves out, and the people were by nature and temperament vehement and impassioned, and inclined to act, alike individually and collectively, on the impulse of the moment. These wise representations for a brief period made a great impression on Napoleon. His instructions to Murat, accordingly, at this period, were to conduct himself with the utmost circumspection; to avoid everything which might excite an angry feeling or provoke a hostile collision; to strengthen his military hold of the country; but to do nothing which might disturb the pacific negotiations by which he hoped, without drawing the sword, to obtain in a few days the whole objects of his ambition.¹*

¹ Napoleon to Murat, March 29, 1808. Sav. iii. 168. Thiers, viii. 541, 543, 545.

* "I fear," said Napoleon, "M. Grand-duke of Berg, that you are deceiving me on the real situation of Spain, and that you deceive yourself also. The events of the 19th March have singularly complicated our affairs; I am in the greatest perplexity; never suppose that you are engaged with a disarmed nation, and that you have only to show yourself to insure the submission of Spain. The revolution of 20th March proves that they still have energy. You have to deal with a *virgin people*; they already have all the courage, and they will soon have all the enthusiasm, which you meet with among men who are not worn out by political passions.

His admirable letter to Murat, portraying his views regarding them. March 29.

"The aristocracy and the clergy are the masters of Spain; if they become seriously alarmed for their privileges and their existence, they will rouse the

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

61.
Symptoms
of resistance
in Spain to
the invaders.
April 21.

Murat, however, was not a character to execute with skill the delicate mission with which he was intrusted; and he was too much accustomed to make everything bend to military force, to be qualified to assume at once, in circumstances singularly difficult, the foresight and circumspection of an experienced diplomatist. His precipitance and arrogance, accordingly, accelerated the catastrophe the Emperor was so solicitous to avoid. The Emperor, too, on hearing of the acclamations with which Murat had been received on entering Madrid, got the better of all his scruples, and returned with more determination than ever to his ambitious designs. He entirely mistook the cause of the favourable demonstration which had been made, thinking it was an indication of a par-

people and induce an unending war. At present I have many partisans among them; if I show myself as a conqueror, I will soon cease to have any. The Prince of the Peace is detested, because they accuse him of having given up Spain to France: that is the cry which led to the usurpation of Ferdinand; but for it the popular party would have been the least powerful. The Prince of Asturias has none of the qualities essential for the chief of a nation; that want, however, will not prevent them, in order to oppose us, from making him a hero. I have no wish to use violence towards that family; it is never expedient to render one's-self odious, and inflame hatred. Spain has above one hundred thousand men in arms; less would suffice to sustain an interior war; scattered over several points, they might succeed in effecting the total overthrow of the monarchy. I have now exhibited to you the difficulties which are manifest; there are others which you will not fail soon to discover.

"England will not let slip this opportunity of multiplying our embarrassments; she sends out forces daily, which she keeps on the coasts of Portugal and the Mediterranean; she is making enrolments of Sicilians and Portuguese. The royal family having quitted Portugal to establish itself in the Indies, nothing but a revolution can change the state of that country, and that is the event for which, perhaps, Europe is the least prepared. The persons who see the monstrous state of the government in its true light are a small minority; the great majority profit by its abuses. Consistently with the interests of my empire, I can do infinite good to Spain. What are the best means of attaining that object? Should I advance to Madrid, and assume the rights of a protector by declaring for the father against the son? It is difficult to re-establish Charles IV. His rule and his favourite have become so unpopular, they could not stand three months. Ferdinand, again, is the enemy of France; it is because he is so that they have put him on the throne. To keep him there would be to assist the factions who, for twenty-five years, have wished the subjugation of France. A family alliance would be a feeble bond; the Queen Elizabeth and other Princesses perished miserably when it was wished to sacrifice them to atrocious vengeance. I think we should precipitate nothing, and take counsel from future events.

tiality for French government, when in fact it was only an expression of joy at beholding the supposed supporter of Ferdinand VII. Already, without his being aware of it, the real sentiments of the people had made themselves known. An alarming explosion had taken place at Toledo: cries of "Long live Ferdinand VII.!" had been heard in the streets from countless multitudes; and when General Dupont was despatched, five days afterwards, to restore order, it was only by a well-timed and earnest mediation of the archbishop that a serious conflict was avoided. The fermentation in the capital was hourly increasing, especially since it was known that Ferdinand had crossed the frontier to throw himself into the arms of Napoleon, and that his father and Godoy had since set out in the same direction.¹

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

April 26.

¹ Foy, iii.

169, Tor.

124, 126.

Thib. vi.

369, 371.

Thiers, viii.

546.

"I do not approve of your taking possession so precipitately as you have done of Madrid: you should have kept the army ten leagues from the capital. Your entry into Madrid, by exciting the alarm of the Spaniards, has powerfully supported Ferdinand. I will write to you what part to adopt in regard to the old King: take care you do not commit me to meet with Ferdinand *in Spain*, unless you deem it expedient for me to recognise him as King of Spain. Above all, take care that the Spaniards do not suspect what course I am about to adopt: you can have no difficulty in doing so, for I have not fixed upon one myself.

"Impress upon the nobles and clergy, that if France is obliged to interfere in the affairs of Spain, their privileges will be respected. Say to the magistrates and citizens of towns, and to the enlightened persons, that Spain requires the re-creation of the machine of government: that it has need of institutions which will preserve it from the pressure of feudality, and protect and encourage industry. Paint to them the present condition of France, despite the wars it has undergone: the splendour of its religion; the importance of a political regeneration; the internal security and external respect which it brings in its train. I will attend to your private interests—have no thought of them—*Portugal remains at my disposal*. Let the French army avoid every encounter, either with the Spanish army or detached bodies; not a cartridge should be burned on either side. Keep the army always some days' march distant from the Spanish corps. *If war break out, all is lost.*"—NAPOLEON to MURAT, 29th March 1808; SAVARY, iii. 68, 171. History does not afford a more luminous example of sagacious foresight than this letter presents; and yet the Emperor soon after fell headlong into the very dangers which he here so clearly depicted, and was so desirous to avoid! It is remarkable as a proof of his profound habits of dissimulation, even with his most confidential servants, that, in this letter to his lieutenant at Madrid, he makes no mention of the design to place a relation of his own on the throne of Spain, though only three days before he had offered it to Louis, King of Holland.—See *ante*, Chap. II., § 50.

CHAP.
LII.

1808.
62.

Arrogant
conduct of
Murat.

April 23.

April 24.

¹ Thib. vi.
369, 371.
Tor. i. 124,
127. Foy,
iii. 159, 160.
Lond. i. 71,
72. Thiers,
viii. 562,
563.

Though the French had hitherto observed tolerable discipline, yet the disorders inseparable from the continued passage of such large bodies of men, accustomed to the license of campaigns, had produced repeated conflicts between them and the inhabitants; blood had flowed in several places, and at Burgos the assemblage had been so alarming, that it required to be dispersed by regular discharges of the French infantry. The common people, whose instinct often sees deeper into the real tendency of events than the speculations of more learned persons, were in such a state of agitation at the King's departure, that they would have broken out into open insurrection, had not his counsellors issued a proclamation, in which it was declared that Napoleon was coming in person to Madrid, to consolidate the happiness of Spain, and that the King had only gone to meet his august guest, and conduct him to the capital. Irritated at these symptoms of resistance, and looking to no means but force for its suppression, Murat wrote in the most menacing terms to Don Antonio, stating that he could permit no concourse of men in the streets; that the anarchy which prevailed was intolerable; that his resolution to suppress it was irrevocably taken; and that, if the government was not sufficiently strong to enforce obedience to its orders, he would take upon himself the maintenance of the public tranquillity. The regency issued severe proclamations against seditious assemblages or meetings, and replied in the most submissive manner to the thundering menaces of Murat: but though no public demonstration had yet taken place, the most alarming reports were in circulation. The French officers publicly gave out that Napoleon would reinstate Charles IV. on the throne; the departure of that sovereign with the Prince of the Peace for the Pyrenees seemed to countenance that idea; and reports were circulated, and greedily credited, that thirty thousand armed Biscayans had fallen on Bayonne,¹ and rescued their beloved

Prince from his oppressors, while Aragon, Catalonia, and Navarre had risen in a body to cut off the retreat of the French army.

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

At length, in the beginning of May, matters came to extremities. The government was a prey to the most cruel disquietude, being left in the approaching crisis of the monarchy with the responsibility of command, and without its powers; ignorant which sovereign they were ultimately to obey; fearful of betraying their country, and equally so of precipitating it into a hopeless struggle; actuated at times by a generous desire to maintain the national independence, and throw themselves on public sympathy for their support, and apprehensive at others that in so doing they might mar an accommodation when on the point of being concluded, and incur the pains of treason from a sovereign whom they had involved in irretrievable embarrassments. Unable to determine on any decided course in the midst of such unparalleled difficulties, they adopted meanwhile the prudent step of confining the troops to their barracks, and exercising the most rigid vigilance, by means of the police, to prevent the quarrels, often attended with bloodshed, which were perpetually occurring between the French soldiers and the Spanish citizens. The Imperial Guard, with a division of infantry and brigade of cavalry, alone were quartered in Madrid; the artillery was all in the Retiro: but large bodies of troops, amounting in all to above thirty thousand men, were in the immediate neighbourhood, ready to pour in on the first signal. The whole population of the capital was in the streets; business was everywhere at a stand; and in the menacing looks and smothered agitation of the groups might be seen decisive proofs that a great explosion was at hand. “Agebatur huc illuc urbs vario turbæ fluctuantis impulsu; completis undique basilicis ac templis, lugubri prospectu, neque populi aut plebis ulla vox: sed attoniti vultus, et conversæ ad omnia aures: non tumultus,

63.
Extreme agitation at Madrid at the approaching departure of the rest of the royal family.

CHAP.
LII.

1803.
1 Tac. Hist.
i. 40.
April 29.

2 Tor. i. 127,
135. Foy,
iii. 159, 163.
Nell. i. 49,
55. Lond.
i. 72, 73.
Thib. vi.
370, 372.

64.
Commotion
at Madrid
on 2d May.

non quies : quale magni metus et magnæ iræ silentium erat.”¹ * Matters were in this combustible state when Murat demanded that the Queen of Etruria, and the Infants Don Francisco and Don Antonio, should forthwith set out for Bayonne. The government hesitated on this demand, which was in effect delivering up the whole remainder of the royal family into the hands of the French Emperor : Murat insisted, throwing upon them the whole responsibility of a war in case of refusal ; and the minister of war, upon being referred to, drew so gloomy a picture of the military resources of the monarchy, that resistance was deemed impossible, and this last requisition was agreed to, and the hour of their departure fixed for the following morning.²

At ten o'clock on that day the royal carriages came to the door of the palace, and preparations for the departure of the princes took place. The Queen of Etruria, who from her long residence in Italy had ceased to be an object of interest to the people, set off first, and was allowed to depart without disturbance, though an immense crowd was collected, and the whole city was in violent agitation. Two other carriages remained, and it was known among the bystanders that they were to convey the Infants Don Antonio and Don Francisco : a report soon spread that Don Francisco, who was a boy of thirteen, was weeping in the apartments above, and refused to go away : presently an aide-de-camp of Murat arrived on horseback, and, making his way through the throng, ascended the stairs of the palace ; the report instantly flew through the crowd that he was come to force the royal youth from the palace of his fathers. Nothing more was requisite to throw the already excited

* “The city was agitated various ways by the changing impulse of the mob ; the temples and courts were everywhere filled by crowds with a mournful aspect, from whom not a voice was to be heard : but the countenances were bewildered, the ears of all erect—it was neither a tumult nor quiet, but the silence which bespoke mighty fear and mighty wrath.”

multitude into a commotion: the French officer was violently assailed, and would have been despatched on the spot, if Don Miguel Flores, an officer of the Walloon Guards had not protected him at the hazard of his own life. Both would, however, in all probability, have fallen victims to the fury of the populace, had not a French picquet at that moment come up, which withdrew the officer in safety to his comrades. Murat instantly resolved to punish severely this insult to his authority: a detachment of foot-soldiers appeared with two pieces of cannon, and by several discharges with grapeshot, within point-blank range, easily dispersed the crowd which was collected round the palace. But the sound of these cannon resounded from one end of the Peninsula to the other; in its ultimate effects it shook the empire of Napoleon to its foundation: it was literally the beginning of the end.¹

CHAP.
LII.
1808.

¹ Nell. i. 53,
54. Tor. i.
135, 137.
Foy, iii. 163,
165. Lond.
i. 73.

Instantly, as if by enchantment, the city was in a tumult: the Spanish vehemence was roused at once into action. All considerations of prudence, consequences, and probabilities of success were forgotten in the intense indignation of the moment. Everywhere the people flew to arms: knives, daggers, bayonets, were seized wherever they could be found; the gun-smiths' shops ransacked for firearms, and all French detachments passing through the streets surrounded, and in many cases cut to pieces. Such a tumultuary effort, however, could not long prevail against the discipline and skill of regular soldiers: the Spanish troops were locked up, by orders of their government, in their barracks, and could render no assistance; and though the rapid concentration of the French, when the firing commenced, induced the people for a time to imagine that they had driven them from the capital, yet they were soon, and cruelly, undeceived. Reinforced by the numerous battalions which now poured from all quarters into the city, and supported by the artillery, which on the first alarm had been brought from the

65.
Severe con-
flicts in the
streets.

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

Retiro, the French returned to the charge : rapid discharges of grape cleared the streets of Alcala and San Geronymo ; while the Polish lancers and Mamelukes of the Imperial Guard, following up the advantage, charged repeatedly through the flying masses, and took a bloody revenge for the death of their comrades. Meanwhile the Spanish troops, agitated by the sound of the tumult and discharges of artillery, but without any orders how to act, were uncertain what to do, when they were decided by an attack of the French on one of their barracks. Determined by this hostile act, the artillerymen drew out their guns, and placing themselves in front of the people, who had retreated to them for support, fired several rounds with fatal effect into the French columns, which were approaching. By a sudden rush, however, the cannon were carried, and a great part of the artillerymen bayoneted, among whom were the brave Daoiz and Velarde, illustrious as the first distinguished men who fell in the Peninsular war. At two o'clock in the afternoon the insurrection was suppressed at all points, and the troops on both sides had returned to their barracks :—on the side of the French two hundred had fallen ; on that of the Spaniards, twelve hundred.^{1*}

¹ Tor. i. 135,
139. Nell.
i. 53, 55.
Nap. i. 23,
24. South.
i. 310, 315.
Lond. i. 74.
Thib. vi. 373,
374. Foy,
iii. 163, 170.

66.

Barbarous
massacres
subsequent-
ly commit-
ted by
Murat.

Hitherto neither party could be said to have been to blame : the tumult, however deplorable in its consequences, was evidently the result of a collision unpremeditated on both sides ; the measures of Napoleon had rendered unavoidable an ebullition of indignation on the part of the outraged Spanish nation ; they had burst forth, and could not complain if they met with the usual fate or hazards of war. In repelling the violence with which they were assailed, the French had not exceeded the

* “Suivant la correspondance du ministre de Prusse à Madrid, il aurait péri dans cette journée près de deux cents Français et environ douze cents Espagnols. Le recit de cet agent nous paraît être exact. Témoin désintéressé, il n’a aucune raison pour augmenter ou restreindre le chiffre des pertes dans aucun des deux partis.”—BIGNON, vii. 261, note.

bounds of military duty ; the Spanish ministers, especially O'Farril and Azanza, had thrown themselves into the thickest of the tumult, earnestly imploring a cessation of the strife, and, at the hazard of their own lives, had saved great numbers of both nations from destruction. Many deeds of generosity had occurred on both sides, and shed a lustre alike on the French and Spanish character. But at this juncture, after the fighting had ceased and the danger was entirely over, Murat commenced a massacre as unprovoked as it was impolitic, as unjustifiable as it was inhuman. Trusting to the amnesty which had been proclaimed by the chiefs on both sides, the Spaniards had resumed in part their ordinary occupations, or were walking about the streets discussing the events of the day, when great numbers of them were seized by the French soldiers, on the charge of having been engaged in the tumult, hurried before a military commission, and forthwith condemned to be shot.¹

CHAP.
LII.

1808.

¹ Tor. i. 141.
Foy, iii. 171.
Thib. vi. 374.
Nap. i. 24.

Preparations were immediately made to carry the sentences into execution: the mournful intelligence spread like wildfire through Madrid; and all who missed a relation or friend were seized with an agonising fear that he was among the victims of military barbarity. While the people were in this state of anxiety, and when the approach of night was beginning to increase the general consternation, the firing began, and the regular discharge of heavy platoons at the Retiro, in the Prado, the Puerto del Sol, and the church of Senora de la Soledad, told but too plainly that the work of death was in progress. The dismal sounds froze every heart with horror: all that had been suffered during the heat of the conflict was as nothing compared to the agonising feeling of that cold-blooded execution. Nor did the general grief abate when the particulars of the massacre became known. Numbers had been put to death, who were merely found in the streets with a knife on their persons, and who had never been in the conflict at all:² all were denied the consolations of

67.
His atrocious
cruelty.

² Foy, iii.
171, 172.
Thib. vi. 374,
375. Tor.
i. 141, 142.
Lond. i. 74.
South. i. 316,
317. Nap. i.
24, 25.

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religion in their last moments. Tied two and two, they were mown down by repeated discharges of musketry: the murders were continued on the following morning; and nearly a hundred had perished before, on the earnest intercession of the Spanish ministers, Murat consented to put a stop to the barbarity.*

68.
Unjustifi-
able nature
of this step.

This atrocious massacre was as impolitic as it was unjustifiable. The Spaniards, who had taken up arms with such desperate though hopeless courage, to prevent the last remnant of their royal family from being torn away from their capital, were not the subjects of the French crown, nor could they be regarded, either legally or morally, as rebels to its authority. Deprived as they were by the fraud and artifices of the French Emperor of their lawful sovereign, with their capital in the possession of his troops, and their fortresses perfidiously seized by his directions, they had no resource but in national resistance. To treat a nation so situated, when attempting to assert its rights, like rebels against their own government, and in cold blood put them to death in great numbers after the conflict was over, was so glaring an act of cruelty and injustice as could not fail to excite the unanimous indignation of mankind. Of all people in the world the French had the least right to object to such a popular effort in defence of the national independence, as it was founded on the principle on which their whole resistance to the coalition of the European powers against their Revolution had been founded, and

* "Among those who were shot were many who had never been engaged in the conflict, and whose only crime consisted in being found on the streets with large knives or cutting instruments upon their persons. They were put to death without the assistance of their priest to console their last moments—a circumstance which in that religious country added to the horror which the executions excited."—Foy, iii. 172. The honesty and candour of General Foy are as admirable as his talents and eloquence.

"At the distance of twenty years," says an eye-witness, the Spanish historian, "our hair still stands on end at the recollection of that mournful and silent night, the calm of which was only interrupted by the cries of the unhappy victims, or the sound of the cannon and musketry discharged at intervals for

which they had, on numberless occasions, held up to the admiration and imitation of mankind.

The indignation, accordingly, which this massacre excited throughout Spain was indescribable. With a rapidity that never could have been anticipated, in a country where so little internal communication existed, the intelligence flew from city to city, from province to province, and awakened that universal and energetic feeling of national resentment, which, if properly directed, is the certain forerunner of great achievements. With a spirit hitherto unknown in Europe since the commencement of the first triumphs of the French revolutionary armies, the people in all the provinces, without any concert amongst each other, or any direction from the existing authorities, began to assemble and concert measures for the national defence. Far from being intimidated by the possession of their capital and principal fortresses by the enemy, they were only roused, by the sight of such advantages in the hands of a perfidious foe, to the more vigorous exertions to dispossess him. The movement was not that of faction or party; it animated alike men of all ranks, classes, and professions. The flame spread equally in the lonely mountains as in the crowded cities; among the hardy labourers of the Basque provinces as the light-hearted peasantry of the Andalusian slopes; amid the pastoral valleys of Asturias and the rich fields of Valencia, as in the crowded emporiums of Barcelona and Cadiz.¹ The movement was universal, unpremeditated, and simultaneous; and within a week after the untoward

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69.

Extreme
indignation
which this
massacre
excited in
Spain.

¹ South. i.
334, 336.
Lud. i. 74,
76. Tor. iii.
173, 175.
Foy, i. 189,
192. Thib.
vi. 411, 414.

their destruction. The inhabitants all retired to their homes, deplored the cruel fate which was then befalling a parent, a brother, a child. We, in our family, were bewailing the loss of the unhappy Oviedo, whose release we had been unable to obtain, when he entered pale and trembling into the house. He had been saved by the generosity of a French officer, after his hands were bound, and he was drawn up for execution in the court of the Retiro, who was melted by the energy of his address, in that awful moment, to break his bonds, and set him at liberty. He was hardly out of the limits of the palace when he heard the discharges which terminated the agony of his companions in misfortune. Among the victims were many priests, old men, and persons of the most respectable character."—TORENO, i. 142, 143.

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70.
Ferdinand
arrives at
Bayonne,
and is
kindly re-
ceived by
Napoleon.

April 20.

tidings reached Bayonne, Napoleon was already engaged in a struggle, which threatened to be of the most sanguinary character, with the Spanish people.

While the perfidious invasion of Napoleon, and the cruel massacres of Murat, were thus exciting the flames of a national war in the Peninsula, matters were fast approaching a crisis at Bayonne. Intimidated by the violence of Murat, and no longer able to withstand the commands which he conveyed to them from his imperial master, the Infants Don Francisco and Don Antonio set out, the day after the tumult at Madrid was quelled, for Bayonne, leaving the capital without any native government, entirely at the mercy of the French generals. Before they could arrive at the place of their destination, however, matters had reached a crisis between Napoleon and the royal family of Spain. No sooner had Ferdinand taken the fatal step of crossing the Bidassoa, and throwing himself upon the generosity of the French Emperor, than he discerned, in the manner in which he was received, such tokens as inspired the most serious disquietude as to his future fate. The customary marks of respect to a crowned head were wanting; the French authorities addressed him only by the title of "Your Royal Highness," instead of "Your Majesty." His first reception by Napoleon, however, was calculated to dispel these sinister presentiments. Shortly after his arrival at Bayonne, the Emperor came in person on horseback, attended by a brilliant staff, to pay him a visit; Ferdinand went to the end of the street to meet him; the Emperor embraced him round the neck, and though he never used the word Majesty, yet he treated him with such distinction as inspired the most flattering hopes.¹

¹ Cev. 33,
35. Escoiq.
56, 58. Foy,
iii. 151.
South. i. 260,
261. Thiers,
viii. 582.

On the same day he went to dine at the château of Marac, where the imperial headquarters were established; Napoleon sent his own carriages to bring him and his suite to his palace, where he was received by the Emperor himself at the foot of the staircase—a piece of attention

never paid by sovereigns except to crowned heads. During the entertainment, the attention of the Emperor to his guest was unbounded ; and although he still eluded the decisive word "Majesty," yet his manner was such as to inspire both Ferdinand and his attendants with the belief that he was their decided friend, and that every difficulty would speedily be adjusted. But this pleasing illusion was of short duration. After sitting a short time at table, Ferdinand returned to his hotel ; while Escoiquiz remained, by special desire, to have a private conference with Napoleon. In the course of it, the Emperor fully unfolded his real design, and informed the faithful counsellor, without disguise, that his royal master must make up his mind to an immediate abdication. Escoiquiz pleaded and remonstrated, but in vain : he was informed, in the most peremptory terms, that he had no alternative but immediate submission. He concluded in these words—"Neither you nor Spain can resist me. Policy, policy must alone direct such a person as me. Return to your prince ; dispose him to become King of Etruria, if he will be a king somewhere ; for he may rest assured he shall never be a king of Spain." At the same time Savary, at the hotel of Ferdinand VII., made the same announcement to that monarch in person. A few minutes after the Spanish King arrived there, he was followed by Savary, who announced, on the part of the Emperor, that his resolution was irrevocably taken, that Ferdinand must instantly resign the throne both of Spain and of the Indies, in both of which the family of the Bourbons was to be succeeded by a prince of the Napoleon dynasty. Should he agree amicably to these conditions, hopes were held out that he might obtain the grand-duchy of Tuscany as an indemnity. It is remarkable that Napoleon should have chosen for the time of this stunning announcement the very moment when Ferdinand had returned from his gracious reception at the imperial residence ;¹ and for the person to convey it, the very officer who had been despatched

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1808.

71.

But immediately after is told he must resign the crown.

¹ *Cev.* 33, 37,
Escoiq. 56,
 60. *Tor.* i.
 146, 147.
Thib. vi. 356,
 357. *Foy*,
 iii. 151, 152.
South. i.
 260, 262.
Thiers, viii.
 582, 583.

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by himself to Madrid for the purpose of inducing him to advance to Bayonne to meet him, and who had offered to pledge his head, not five days before, that the moment he arrived there the Prince of Asturias would be recognised as King of Spain.

72.
Arguments
of Napoleon
to enforce
the abdica-
tion.

This terrible announcement fell with the more force upon Ferdinand and his counsellors, that they were entirely unprepared for it; the assurances held out by Savary and the letters of Napoleon having inspired them with the belief, that all that was wanting to a satisfactory adjustment of affairs was, that Ferdinand should show so much deference to Napoleon as to proceed to Bayonne to meet him. Neither the Prince nor his council, however, were overwhelmed by the extraordinary disclosure. Without absolutely committing themselves at first to any decided proposition, they continued the negotiation for nearly a week afterwards, both by means of Cevallos and Escoiquiz, who had frequent interviews with Napoleon in person, and with Champagny, who had now succeeded Talleyrand as his minister for foreign affairs. These conferences, however, came to nothing. On the part of Napoleon and his ministers, it was strongly urged, that the interest, not merely of France, but of Spain, imperatively required that the two monarchies should be placed under dynasties belonging to the same family; that Napoleon could not submit any more than Louis XIV. to have a dubious ally or hidden enemy in his rear, while engaged with the forces of Europe in front; that the secret hostility of Spain had been clearly evinced by the ill-timed proclamation of the Prince of the Peace immediately before the battle of Jena; that the numberless corruptions and abuses of the Spanish internal administration loudly called for an immediate remedy, and this could never be applied with safety by any other authority but that great conqueror who, educated amidst the storms and enlightened by the experience of the Revolution,¹ was now the master of such irresistible power as to be able to give to other states

¹ *Moniteur*,
Sept. 7,
1808. *Thib.*
vi. 356, 359.
Cev. 35, 36.
Escoiq. 26,
35. *Sav.* iii.
168, 172.
Thiers, viii.
586, 587.

the benefits of liberal institutions suited to the spirit of the age, without the risk of those convulsions which had obliterated so many of their beneficial effects in his own country.

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It was replied to these specious arguments, which came with additional weight from the mouth of the Emperor, by Cevallos and Escoiquiz, that it was as impolitic as unjust to compel a sovereign who had left his own dominions to throw himself upon the honour of another, and that too at the special request of that other, to renounce the throne which had descended to him from his ancestors; that if anything was deemed illegal in the resignation of Charles IV. at Aranjuez, that might be a good reason for restoring the throne to the deposed monarch, but could be none for transferring it to the French Emperor; that the effort, however, now made to obtain a renunciation of the crown from Ferdinand evidently showed that the transaction was regarded as legal, and that the title to dispose of the crown was vested in its present holder; that the expedience, for both monarchies, of a close alliance between France and Spain was indeed indisputable; but that France had already enjoyed it ever since the peace of Bâle, and the way to secure it in future was instantly to recognise the Prince of Asturias, whereby both the monarch and his subjects would be bound by such important obligations as would render the future union between the two monarchies indissoluble; whereas, by wresting from him his sceptre, the most imminent risk would be run of exciting a national war in the Peninsula, and giving the English an advantageous base from which to direct their military efforts against Napoleon, besides the certainty of separating the Transatlantic colonies from the mother country, and throwing those vast and rising states, with their important treasures and commerce, into the arms of the inveterate enemy of the French empire.¹

73.
Answer of
Ferdinand's
counsellors.

¹ Cev. 37, 45.
Escoiq. 26,
50. Sav. iii.
168, 170.

To this last argument, the justice of which could not

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74.
Reply of
Napoleon.

April 24.

be denied, Napoleon replied, that he was well aware of that danger, but that he had provided against it by having sent out frigates to the South American states, who were prepared to receive with thankfulness their transfer to a prince of the Napoleon dynasty. These conferences, as might have been expected, led to no result ; at a secret meeting of the counsellors of Ferdinand, held at midnight, it was resolved to decline the proposals of the French Emperor, and demand passports for their immediate return to Spain, which was accordingly done next day. Napoleon was highly indignant at this resistance to his wishes, and refused the passports, under the pretence that, till the Aranjuez affair was cleared up, he could neither issue passports to Ferdinand as King of Spain, nor permit him to depart from a situation where he was liable to answer for his conduct to his justly offended parent. At the same time, a decisive report was presented by Champagny to the Emperor, which was, of course, merely the echo of his private instructions. This state paper set out with his favourite maxim, that the design of Louis XIV. must be resumed ; *that policy required, justice authorised*, the troubles of Spain rendered it indispensable, that a change of dynasty should take place ; that the interests of France and Spain indispensably called for identity both in the dynasty who governed and the institutions which prevailed amongst them ; that to recognise the Prince of Asturias was to surrender Spain to the enemies of France, and deliver it over to English usurpation ; to restore Charles IV. was to renew the reign of imbecility and corruption, and occasion a boundless effusion both of French and Spanish blood : no alternative remained, therefore, but for Napoleon to dispossess them both, and establish in Spain a prince of his own family, with institutions analogous to those of the French empire.¹

April 26.
1 Moniteur,
Sept. 7,
1808. Thib.
vi. 356, 359.
Cev. 35, 38.
Escoig. 26,
62. Sav.iii.
168, 172.
Tor. i. 148,
150. Foy,
iii. 152.

Napoleon was greatly perplexed at the steady refusal of Ferdinand to surrender the throne. He had not

calculated upon such firmness in any prince of the house of Bourbon. Not that he had the slightest hesitation as to persisting in his original plan of entirely dethroning that family, but that he attached the greatest weight to the acquisition of a legal title to their possessions. No man knew better that, although force may subjugate the physical strength, a sense of legal right is generally necessary to win the moral consent of nations; and although Spain seemed prostrated, with its fortresses and capital in his possession, yet he deemed his acquisitions insecure till he had obtained, in form at least, the consent of the legal inheritors of its throne. Hoping, therefore, to succeed better with the father than he had done with the son, he reiterated his directions to Murat to send on Charles IV. and the Queen, with the Prince of the Peace, to Bayonne as quickly as possible. Such was his anxiety on this subject, that he enjoined him, if necessary, to *use force* to compel them to come.* Meanwhile, in private conferences with Escoiquiz, he unfolded with unrestrained confidence, from their very commencement, his views upon the Spanish Peninsula. They took their rise, hesitated, from the proclamation of the Prince of the Peace on the eve of the battle of Jena. Ever since that important revelation, he had been able to see nothing in the relation of the Spanish government but secret enmity veiled under the mask of friendship; the contemplated marriage of the Prince of Asturias to a relation of his own, appeared but a feeble bond to hold together nations now actuated by hostile sentiments: he proposed to give to the Prince of Asturias an indemnity in Portugal or Tuscany, and to place one of his brothers on the Spanish

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75.
Napoleon
sends for
Charles IV.,
and has a
private con-
ference with
Escoiquiz.

* "Regardant la présence de Charles IV. comme indispensable pour opposer au droit du fils le droit du père, il pressa vivement Murat de faire partir les vieux souverains, et de lui envoyer aussi le Prince de la Paix, toujours prisonnier à Villa-Viciosa. Napoléon enjoignit à Murat d'employer la force, s'il le fallait, non pour le départ de la vieille cour, qui demandait instamment à se mettre en route et que personne ne songeait à retenir, mais pour la délivrance du Prince de la Paix, que les Espagnols ne voulaient relâcher à aucun prix."—THIERS, viii. 590, 591.

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¹ Thib. vi.
357, 358.
Tor. i. 148,
149. Escoiquiz.
57, 59.
Thiers, viii.
590.

throne. He had now divulged to him, and to him alone, the whole of his designs in regard to the Peninsula. The conversation in which these determinations were expressed by the Emperor is given at full length by Escoiquiz, and is one of the most valuable historical documents of his reign. Though doubtless extended and amplified by the Spanish counsellor, it contains all the marks of Napoleon's original thought; and Thibaudcau, whose long acquaintance with the Emperor in the council of state had rendered him the best possible judge both of his ideas and expressions, has declared that it "bears the signet-mark of truth."¹*

From this embarrassment, however, Napoleon was soon

His views
as stated to
Escoiquiz.

* "I have long desired, Monsieur Escoiquiz," said the Emperor, "to speak to you on the affairs of the Peninsula, with the frankness which your talents and your position with the Prince of Asturias deserve. I cannot, in any situation, refuse to interest myself in the fate of the unhappy King who has thrown himself on my protection. The abdication of Charles IV. at Aranjuez, in the midst of seditious guards, and a revolted people, was clearly a compulsory act. My troops were then in Spain; some of them were stationed near the court; appearances authorised the belief that I had some share in that act of violence, and my honour requires that I should take immediate steps to dissipate such a suspicion. I cannot recognise, therefore, the abdication of Charles IV., till that monarch, who has transmitted to me a secret protest against it, shall have confirmed it by a voluntary deed when freed from restraint.

"I would say further that the interests of my empire require that the house of Bourbon, the implacable enemy of mine, should lose the throne of Spain; and the interests of your nation equally call for the same change. The new dynasty which I shall introduce will give it a good constitution, and, by its strict alliance with France, preserve Spain from any danger on the side of that power which is alone in a situation seriously to menace its independence. Charles IV. is willing to cede to me his rights, and those of his family, persuaded that his sons, the Infants, are incapable of governing the kingdom in the difficult times which are evidently approaching.

"These, then, are the reasons which have decided me to prevent the dynasty of the Bourbons from reigning any longer in Spain. But I esteem Ferdinand, who has come with so much loyalty to throw himself into my power, and I am anxious to give him some indemnity for the sacrifices which he will be required to make. Propose to him, therefore, to renounce the crown of Spain for himself and his descendants, and I will give him in exchange Etruria, with the title of King, as well as my niece in marriage. If he refuses these conditions, I will come to an understanding with his father, and neither he nor his brother shall receive any indemnity. If, on the other hand, he does what I desire, Spain shall preserve its independence, its laws, usages, and religion. I do not desire a village of Spain for myself."

Escoiquiz then endeavoured in vain to combat the Emperor's reasons for

relieved by the arrival of Charles IV. and the Queen at Bayonne. Such was the impatience of the royal travellers to reach the place of their destination, that they wrote from Aranda to Napoleon to inform him of their approach, and testify their anxiety to throw themselves entirely upon his protection. So sensible were the counsellors of Ferdinand of the advantage which the French Emperor would derive from the presence of the late monarch, that they were no sooner informed of his approach than they again earnestly solicited passports for Ferdinand to return to Spain, which were refused; and it was soon apparent, from the movements of the police, that he was detained a prisoner in the hotel he occupied. Meanwhile Napoleon enjoined Murat to com-

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1808.

76.

The arrival of Charles IV. solves the difficulty. His reception by Napoleon. April 25.

holding the matter at Aranjuez as constrained. Napoleon then added, "But suppose it were not so, can you deny that the interests of my house require that the Bourbons should cease to reign in Spain? Even if you are right in all that you say, I should answer, Bad policy." Having said these words, he took Escoiquiz by the ear, which he pulled in good humour. "Come, Canon, you are amusing me with real *châteaux en Espagne*. Do you really think that while the Bourbons remain on the throne at Madrid, I could ever have the security which I would have, if they were replaced by a branch of my family? The latter, it is true, might have some disputes with me or my descendants; but so far from wishing, like a Bourbon, the ruin of my house, they would cling to it in moments of danger, as the only support of their own throne.

"It is in vain to speak to me of the difficulties of the enterprise. I have nothing to apprehend from the only power who could disquiet me in it. The Emperor of Russia, to whom I communicated my designs at Tilsit, which were formed at that period, approved of them, and gave me his word of honour he would offer no resistance. The other powers of Europe will remain quiet, and the resistance of the Spaniards themselves cannot be formidable. The rich will endeavour to appease the people, instead of exciting them, for fear of losing their own possessions. I will render the monks responsible for any disorder, and that will lead them to employ their influence, which you know is considerable, in suppressing any popular movements. Believe me, Canon, I have much experience in these matters; *the countries where the monks are numerous are easily subjugated*; and that will take place in Spain, especially when the Spaniards see that I am providing for the national independence and benefit of the country, giving them a liberal constitution, and at the same time maintaining their religion and usages. Even if the people were to rise in a mass, I would succeed in conquering them, by sacrificing two hundred thousand men. I am not blind to the risk of a separation of the colonies; but do not suppose I have been slumbering even on that point. I have long kept up secret communications with Spanish America, and I have lately sent frigates there to obtain certain advices as to what I may expect; and I have every reason to believe that the intelligence which I shall receive will prove of the most favourable description."—ESCOQUIZ, 107, 135; *Pièces Just.*

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April 29.

April 30.

municate to the junta of government and the Council of Castile at Madrid, the protest of Charles IV. against his resignation, which nullified the title of Ferdinand to the *present* enjoyment of the throne, and induced a sort of interregnum favourable to the designs of usurpation which he meditated. His instructions to Murat were not to expect any revolution of opinion in the capital in favour of the changes, but to restrain the common people by the display of force, and endeavour to win over persons of sense by an enumeration of the political and social benefits which the change of dynasty would confer on the Peninsula. On the 29th there appeared in the Bayonne Gazette the protest of Charles IV. against his abdication, and his letter of 23d March to Napoleon—publications which sufficiently evinced the tenor of the reception which he was to experience. On the following day the late King and Queen entered Bayonne, highly elated with the reception they had met with from the French authorities. Ever since passing Burgos they had been treated with royal honours: at the Bidassoa they were received by Berthier with great pomp, and at the gates of Bayonne by the whole garrison under arms. Soon after their arrival at the hotel, Napoleon came to visit them in person, having, in his eagerness to show respect, hastened there at the gallop. The old King met him at the foot of the stair, and threw himself into his arms: Napoleon whispered in his ear, “You will find me always, as you have done, *your best and firmest friend*.” He even supported him under the arm as he returned to the apartments. Such was the apparent kindness of his manner, that the discrowned monarch burst into tears. “See, Louisa!” said the old King, “he is carrying me.” Never had the Emperor’s manner appeared more gracious; never did he more completely impose, by the apparent sincerity of his kindness, upon the intended victims of his perfidy.¹

¹ De Pradt, 92, 91. Thib. vi. 359, 364. Tor. i. 151, 152. Cev. 50, 51. Escoiq. 61, 64. Thiers, viii. 591, 599.

Immediately after the arrival of Charles IV., Napoleon had a private conference with him, the Queen, and the Prince of the Peace, in which it was resolved, by the united authority of the Emperor and the old King, to compel Ferdinand to resign the throne. He rightly judged that, having once overcome that difficulty, it would be a comparatively easy matter to extract the resignation of the crown from the former monarch, when reinstated in his rights. Ferdinand, accordingly, was sent for next day; and the moment he came into the room, Charles IV. commanded him to deliver to him, before six o'clock on the following morning, a simple and unqualified resignation of the crown, signed by himself and all his brothers. In case of refusal, it was distinctly intimated that he and all his counsellors would be proceeded against as traitors. Napoleon strongly supported the old King, and concluded with ominous menaces in the event of refusal. Ferdinand endeavoured to speak in his own defence, but he was interrupted by the King, who commanded him to be silent; and the Queen soon after broke into the apartment, with such violent and passionate expressions, that Ferdinand found it impossible to make a word be heard. He retired from the conference overwhelmed with consternation and despair. Similar threats of instant death were conveyed on the same evening by Duroc to the Infants Don Carlos and Don Antonio; and such was the impression produced by these menaces, that it was determined by the counsellors of Ferdinand that no alternative remained but immediate submission. A conditional resignation was accordingly written out and signed by them all on the following day, in which Ferdinand renounced the crown, on condition that he and his father should both return to Madrid, where the Cortes should be assembled; and that, if Charles declined to return to Spain to govern himself, he should govern the kingdom in his father's name, and as his lieutenant.¹

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77.
Ferdinand
is forced to
resign the
crown.

May 1.

May 2.
¹ Cev. 50, 51.
Escoiq. 64,
65. Tor. i.
151, 152.
Thib. vi.
365, 367.

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1808.

78.

Ferdinand
still refuses
to agree to
an uncondi-
tional resig-
nation.

May 2.

Letter of
Charles to
his son.

This qualified resignation, however, in which the Prince of Asturias still announced his intention of returning to Madrid as his father's lieutenant, and resuming there, in his name, the royal functions, was far from meeting the views of Napoleon, who was irrevocably set upon obtaining from the young King such an unconditional surrender of his rights as might leave the throne vacant for a prince of his own family. He wrote, therefore, a letter, which was signed by Charles IV., and passed for his own production, though the depth of its thought and the energy of its expressions clearly indicated the imperial hand.* Ferdinand, however, was still unmoved, and replied, two days afterwards, in a letter, in which he vindicated his own conduct, and expressed his astonishment at the

* "What has been your conduct?" the old King was made to say. "You have spread sedition through my whole palace; you have excited my very body-guards against me; your own father became your prisoner; my first minister, whom I had raised and adopted into my own family, was dragged, covered with blood, into a dungeon; you have withered my gray hairs, and despoiled them of a crown borne with glory by my fathers, and which I have preserved without stain; you have seated yourself on my throne; you have made yourself the instrument of the mob of Madrid, whom your partisans had excited, and of the foreign troops who at the same moment were making their entry. Old, and broken down with infirmities, I was unable to bear this new disgrace; I had recourse to the Emperor, not as a King at the head of his troops and surrounded by the pomp of a throne, but as a fugitive, abandoned monarch, broken down by misfortune. I have found protection and refuge in the midst of his camp: I owe him my own life, that of the Queen, and that of my prime minister: he is acquainted with all the outrages I have experienced, all the violence I have undergone: he has declared to me that he will never recognise you as King. In tearing from me the crown, it is your own which you have broken; your conduct towards me, your letters, which evince your hatred towards France, have put a wall of brass between you and the throne of Spain. I am King by right of descent; my abdication was the result of force and violence. I can admit the validity of no acts resulting from the assembly of armed mobs; *everything should be done for the people, nothing by them.* Hitherto I have reigned for the people's good, hereafter I shall still act with the same object; when I am once assured that the religion of Spain, its independence, integrity, and institutions are secured, I shall descend to the grave, imploring pardon for you for 'the bitterness of my last days.' I can agree to no assembly of the Cortes; that is a new idea of the inexperienced persons who surround you."—*Letter, CHARLES IV. to FERDINAND, 2d May, 1808.*

Unquestionably it was neither Charles IV. nor the Prince of the Peace who penned these vigorous lines. It is curious to observe the sentiment, "everything for the people, nothing by them," in the mouth of the military champion of the Revolution.

colour now put upon the Aranjuez resignation, which had been uniformly represented by Charles IV. not only as a voluntary act, but as avowedly contemplated for a long time before it took place.* This continued refusal on Ferdinand's part added extremely to the embarrassments of Napoleon, and he was at a loss to perceive any mode by which he could attain his favourite object of gaining possession of the throne of Spain, with the semblance of a conveyance from the legal owner.¹

More successful with the father than the son, Napoleon had already obtained from Charles IV. an unqualified resignation of all his rights to the throne of Spain. A treaty to this effect, agreed to on the 4th and signed on the 5th of May, by Duroc and the Prince of the Peace, in virtue of special powers from their respective masters, contained an unqualified resignation of the crown of Spain, not only for himself and Ferdinand, but for all his successors, and a transference of it in absolute sovereignty to the Emperor Napoleon. The only provisions in favour of Spain were, that the integrity of the kingdom should be preserved; that its limits should be unchanged by the prince whom Napoleon might place on the throne; that the Catholic religion should be maintained, and no Reformed religion tolerated. The palace of Compiègne was to be assigned to the King, the Queen, and the Prince of the Peace, during the lifetime of the former, with a pension of thirty millions of reals, (£40,000.) The only point in this treaty upon which there was any serious discussion was the matter of the

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¹ Tor. i. 152,
153. Thib.
vi. 368, 369.
Cev. 50, 51.
Escoiq. 64,
65.

79.
Napoleon
obtains an
uncondi-
tional sur-
render of
the throne
from Charles
IV.
May 5.

* Ferdinand in this letter made the just observation, "that the perpetual exclusion of his dynasty from the throne of Spain could not be effected without the consent of all those who either had or might acquire rights to its succession, nor without the formal consent of the Spanish nation assembled in Cortes, in a situation free from all restraint; and that any resignation now made would be null, from the obvious restraint under which it was executed." —FERDINAND to CHARLES IV., 4th May 1808; TORENO, vol. i. *App.* No. 9. Already the opposing parties had changed sides: Napoleon, the hero of the Revolution, would consent to no assembling of the Cortes; Ferdinand, the heir of the despotic house of Bourbon, appealed for support to that national assembly.

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LII.

1808.

¹ Tor. i. 404.
App. No. 11.
Cev. 134,
136.

80.
Secret in-
structions
of Ferdi-
nand to the
regency at
Madrid.

pensions; the surrender of the monarchy was agreed to without hesitation by the imbecile monarch and his pusillanimous minister. Thus had Charles IV. the disgrace of terminating his domestic dissensions by the abandonment of his throne and the liberties of his people into the hands of a stranger; and the Prince of the Peace the infamy of affixing his name, as the last act of his ministerial existence, to a deed which deprived his sovereign and benefactor of his crown, and aimed to disinherit for ever his descendants.^{1*}

On the same day on which this treaty was signed, a secret deputation reached Ferdinand from the provisional government of Madrid, consisting of Zayas, aide-de-camp to the minister of war, and Castro, under-secretary of state. They came to demand instructions, chiefly on the points, whether they were at liberty to shift their place of deliberation, as they were subjected to the control of the French army in the capital; whether they should declare war against France, and endeavour to prevent the further entrance of troops into the Peninsula; and whether, in the event of his return being prevented, they should assemble the Cortes. Ferdinand replied, that "he was deprived of his liberty, and in consequence unable to take any steps in order to save either himself or the monarchy; that he therefore authorised the junta of government to add new members to their number, to remove such as they thought proper, and to exercise all the functions of sovereignty; that they should stop the entrance of fresh troops, and commence hostilities the

* Charles IV. was not destitute of good qualities, but he was a weak incapable prince, totally unfit to hold the reins of power during the difficult times which followed the French Revolution. He himself gave the following account to Napoleon of his mode of life at their first dinner together at Bayonne:—"Every day," said he, "winter as well as summer, I went out to shoot from the morning till noon; I then dined, and returned to the chase, which I continued till sunset. Manuel Godoy then gave me a brief account of what was going on, and I went to bed to recommence the same life on the morrow, if not prevented by some important solemnity." Such had been his habits for twenty years, and those, too, the most critical for the Spanish monarchy.

moment that he was removed into the interior of France, a step to which he never would consent till forced to it by violence; that the Cortes should be convoked, in the first instance, to take measures for the defence of the kingdom, and then for such ulterior objects as might require consideration. The decrees necessary to carry these instructions into effect were soon after brought to Madrid by an officer destined for celebrity in future times, DON JOSEPH PALAFOX.¹

From the embarrassment arising from the continued resistance of Ferdinand to make the resignation required of him, Napoleon was at length relieved by the receipt of intelligence of the bloody commotion at Madrid, which at once brought to a crisis the affairs of the Peninsula. He received the news of that calamitous event as he was riding out to Bayonne, at five o'clock in the afternoon of the 5th of May, and immediately returned to his chateau, where he sent for Charles IV., the Queen, Ferdinand, and the Prince of the Peace. The Prince of Asturias was assailed by Charles IV. and the Queen with such a torrent of abuse, that Cevallos, who was present on the occasion, has declared that he cannot prevail on himself to transcribe it. Napoleon joined in the general vituperation, and the sternness of his manner and vehemence of his expressions at once showed that the period had now arrived when submission had become a matter of necessity. He spoke of the outraged honour of the French armies; of the blood of his soldiers, which called aloud for vengeance; of a war of extermination, which he would

CHAP.
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1808.

¹ Thib. i.
377, 378.
South. i.
322, 323.
Cev. 56, 58.
Tor. i. 452,
453.

81.
The intelligence of the events at Madrid, on May 2, compels a resignation of the throne from Ferdinand.

Notwithstanding all this, however, he would have passed for a respectable prince in ordinary times, but for the pernicious influence of his wife; for he was gifted with an admirable memory, quick parts, and considerable powers of occasional application, and had, throughout, that humanity and love of justice, which are the most valuable qualities in a sovereign. But his indolence and negligence of public business ruined everything in the monarchy, by throwing the whole direction of affairs into the hands of the Queen and the Prince of the Peace, whose infamous connexion, dissolute habits, and unbounded corruption, both degraded the character and paralysed the resources of the nation.—
TORENO, i. 155, 156.

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1808.

¹ Thiers,
viii. 614,
615. Cev.
51, 52.
Escoiq. 64,
65. Tor. i.
156. Thib.
vi. 380.
Bign. vii.
262.

wage to vindicate his authority.* He concluded with the ominous words—"Prince, you must choose betwixt cession and death."† Similar menaces were conveyed by Duroc to the Infants Don Carlos and Don Antonio, and other members of the royal family. Sensible now that any further resistance might not only, without any benefit, endanger his own life, but possibly draw after it the destruction of the whole royal family, Ferdinand resolved upon submission.¹

82.

Ferdinand
submits, and
resigns the
crown.
May 6.
May 10.

On the following morning, he addressed a letter to his father, in which he announced his intention of unqualified obedience; and four days afterwards a treaty was signed, by which he adhered to the resignation by his father of the Spanish crown, and acquired in return the title of Most Serene Highness, with the palace, park, and farms of Navarre, with fifty thousand arpents of wood connected therewith, and an annuity of six hundred thousand francs a-year from the French treasury. The same rank, with an annuity of four hundred thousand francs, was allotted to the Infants Don Carlos and Don Antonio. As soon as this treaty was signed, Ferdinand and his brothers were removed to Bordeaux, where the two princes signed a renunciation of their rights to the throne, and Ferdinand was made to affix his name to a proclamation, in which he counselled submission and peace to the Spanish people. The three royal captives were shortly after removed to

May 12.

* Napoleon on this occasion made it a special subject of reproach to Ferdinand, "that by flattering the opinion of the multitude, and forgetting the *sacred respect due to authority*, he had lighted the conflagration now ready to devour the Peninsula.—Foy, iii. 177. "Voilà," said the old King to Ferdinand—"Voilà donc ton ouvrage! le sang de mes sujets a coulé; celui des soldats de mon ami, le grand Napoleon, a coulé aussi. A quels ravages n'aurais-tu pas exposé l'Espagne si nous avions affaire à un vainqueur moins généreux! Voilà les conséquences de ce que toi et les tiens ont fait pour jouir quelques jours plus tôt d'une couronne que j'étais aussi pressé que toi de placer sur ta tête. Tu as déchaîné le peuple, et personne n'en est plus maître aujourd'hui. Rends, rends cette couronne trop pesante pour toi, et donne-la à celui qui seul est capable de la porter."—THIERS, viii. 615.

† "Prince, il faut opter entre la cession ou la mort." Quoique l'on puisse revoquer en doute cette assertion d'une bouche justement suspecte, nous admettons que ce mot ait été prononcé par Napoléon."—BIGNON, vii. 262.

Valençay, the seat of Talleyrand, in the heart of France, where they continued during the remainder of the war. Napoleon on this occasion sent a confidential letter to Talleyrand, directing that the royal captives should be treated with respect but watched with vigilance, and hinting that it was desirable that some fair lady should attach Prince Ferdinand—the more especially if she was secure in the French interest.* No indemnity whatever was provided for the Queen of Etruria or her son, who, compelled by Napoleon in the outset of these transactions to renounce the crown of Tuscany, had been subsequently amused by the elusory promise of a throne in Portugal, and was now sent a destitute captive into the interior of France.^{1†}

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1808.

¹ Cev. 51,
52, 133, 140.
Escoiq. 64,
65. Thib.
vi. 380, 384.
Tor. i. 156,
157, 159.
Foy, iii.
177.

Having now succeeded in his main object of dispossessing the Bourbon family, and obtaining a semblance of legal title from the ejected owners to the Spanish throne, Napoleon was not long of bringing to an issue his other arrangements regarding the Peninsula. The refusal of his brother Louis to accept the throne had induced him to cast his eyes upon Joseph, King of Naples—an arrangement which, besides providing a sovereign who, it was hoped, would prove entirely submissive to the views of the Emperor in that important situation, was attended with the additional advantage of opening a throne for Murat, who, after holding the almost regal state of lieutenant of the Emperor at Madrid, could hardly be expected willingly to descend to any inferior station. To preserve appearances, however, it was deemed advisable that the semblance of

83.
Napoleon
makes
Joseph King
of Spain,
and con-
vokes an
Assembly of
Notables.

* “Si vous avez à Valençay un théâtre, et que vous fassiez venir quelques comédiens, il n’y aura pas de mal. Si le Prince des Asturies s’attachait à quelque jolie femme, cela n’aurait aucun inconvénient, surtout si on en était sûr. J’ai le plus grand intérêt à ce que le Prince des Asturies ne commette aucune fausse démarche. Je désire donc qu’il soit amusé et occupé.”—NAPOLEON to TALLEYRAND, *Bayonne*, 9th May 1808; THIERS, viii. 620.

† Napoleon’s own account of the Bayonne affair is in all substantial points the same as that above given. “Ferdinand offered, on his own account, to govern entirely at my devotion, as much so as the Prince of the Peace had done in the name of Charles IV.; and I must admit that, if I had fallen into their views, I would have acted much more prudently than I have actually done. When I

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- May 3. popular election should be kept up ; and with that view, the moment that the Emperor had obtained the consent of Ferdinand to his resignation, he despatched instructions to Murat, to obtain a petition from the junta of government, and the principal public bodies of Madrid, for the conferring of the throne upon the King of Naples.
- May 4. At the same time, to supply any interim defects of title which might be thought to exist in the Emperor's lieutenant to act in Spain in civil concerns, a decree was signed by Charles IV. on the very day of his renunciation, and transmitted to Madrid, where it arrived three days afterwards, which conferred on Murat the title of Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, with the presidency of the junta of government, which in effect put that important body, now reduced merely to the official ministers, entirely at his disposal. This nomination was accompanied by a proclamation of the old King, drawn up by Godoy, in which he counselled his former subjects, "that they had no chance of safety or prosperity for themselves but in the friendship of the Emperor his ally."
- May 7. This was followed by another, the work of Escoiquiz, from the Prince of Asturias, dated from Bordeaux on the 12th ; in which he also advised his countrymen "to remain tranquil, and to look for their happiness only in the wise dispositions and power of Napoleon."¹
- May 12.
¹ For. i. 161, 167.
Foy, iii. 181.
Nell. i. 84.
92.

Though profoundly mortified at not obtaining for himself the throne of Spain, which he had confidently expected, Murat exerted himself to pave the way for that elevation of Joseph which promised so immediately to

had them all assembled at Bayonne, I found myself in command of much more than I could have ventured to hope for; the same occurred there, as in many other events in my life, which had been ascribed to my policy, but in fact were owing to my good fortune. Here I found the Gordian knot before me; I cut it. I proposed to Charles IV. and the Queen that they should cede to me their rights to the throne. They at once agreed to it, I had almost said voluntarily; so deeply were their hearts ulcerated towards their son, and so desirous had they and their favourite now become of security and repose. The Prince of Asturias did not make any extraordinary resistance: neither violence nor menaces were employed against him: *and if fear decided him, which I well believe was the case, it concerns him alone.*"—LAS CASES, iv. 210, 211.

promote his own advantage. The most energetic measures were immediately adopted to obtain at Madrid declarations in favour of the new dynasty ; and the leading authorities, perplexed and bewildered in the unparalleled situation in which they were placed, and by the earnest exhortation to submission which they received from their lawful sovereign, were without difficulty won over to the interest of the rising dynasty. The junta of government, indeed, at first protested against the abdication at Bayonne, and refused to connect themselves in any way with these proceedings : but they were soon given to understand that their lives would be endangered if they continued to uphold the rebel authority of the Prince of Asturias ; and at the same time the most flattering prospects were held out to them, if they took the lead in recognising the new and inevitable order of things. These artifices proved successful ; and the junta, satisfied with protesting that they in no way recognised the acts of Charles IV. and Ferdinand, and that the designation of a new monarch should in no ways prejudice their rights or those of their successors, concluded with the resolution that the Emperor's choice should fall on his elder brother the King of Naples. The municipality of Madrid also presented a petition to the same effect ; and Napoleon, satisfied with having thus obtained the colour of public consent to his usurpation, issued a proclamation convoking an assembly of one hundred and fifty Notables, to meet at Bayonne on the 15th June following. Joseph, who had no choice but submission, quitted with regret the peaceful and smiling shores of Campania, set out for his new kingdom, and arrived at Bayonne on the 6th June, where he was magnificently received by Napoleon, and on the same day proclaimed King of Spain and the Indies.¹*

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84.

Murat's
efforts at
Madrid to
forward
these pro-
jects.

May 12.

May 13.

May 25.

June 6.

¹ Thib. vi.

388, 392.

Tor. i. 161,

168. Foy,

iii. 181, 185.

Nell. i. 84,

92. South.

i. 325, 332.

Thiers, viii.

625.

Napoleon's
proclama-
tion to the
Spaniards,
May 25.

* On this occasion the Emperor addressed the following proclamation to the Spanish people :—"Spaniards ! after a long agony, your nation was on the point of perishing : I saw your miseries, and hastened to apply a remedy. Your grandeur, your power, form an integral part of my own. Your princes have

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85.
Reflections
on this un-
paralleled
chain of
fraud.

Such is a detailed account of the artifices by which Napoleon succeeded in wresting the crowns of Spain and Portugal from their lawful possessors, and placing the first on the head of one of his own brothers, while the second remained at his disposal for the gratification of one of his military lieutenants. Not a shot was fired, not a sword was drawn, to effect the vast transfer. The object for which Louis XIV. unsuccessfully struggled during fourteen years, was gained in six months; present fraud, the terrors of past victory, had done the work of years of conquest. But these extraordinary successes were stained by as great vices; and perhaps in the whole annals of the world, abounding as they do in deeds of wickedness, there is not to be found a more atrocious system of perfidy, fraud, and dissimulation, than that by which Napoleon won the kingdoms of the Spanish peninsula.

86.
Napoleon's
perfidy gen-
erally to-
ward the
nation.

He first marched off the flower of its troops into the north of Germany, and, by professions of amity and friendship, lulled asleep any hostile suspicions which the cabinet of Madrid might have conceived. Next he entered into an agreement with Alexander for the dethronement of its sovereigns, and bought the consent of Russia to that spoliation of the faithful allies of ten years' duration, by surrendering to its ambition the more recent confederates which he had roused into hostility on the banks of the Danube during the desperate struggle of the last six months. He then concluded a treaty with Spain at Fontainebleau, in which he purchased the consent of that power to the partition of his ally Portugal, by promising to the

ceded to me their rights to the crown of Spain. I have no wish to reign over your provinces, but I am desirous of acquiring eternal titles to the love and gratitude of your posterity. Your monarchy is old; my mission is to pour into its veins the blood of youth. I will ameliorate all your institutions, and make you enjoy, if you second my efforts, the blessings of reform without its collisions, its disorders, its convulsions. I have convoked a general assembly of deputies from your provinces and cities; I am desirous of ascertaining your wants by personal intercourse; I will then lay aside all the titles I have acquired, and place your glorious crown on the head of my second self, after having

court of Madrid a share of its spoils, and to its minister a princely sovereignty carved out of its dominions; and in return for this forbearance solemnly guaranteed all its possessions. Hardly was the ink of this treaty dry, when he directed his armies across the Pyrenees, in such force as to evince an intention not merely of appropriating to himself the whole dominions of his old tributary dependant Portugal, but of seizing upon at least the northern provinces of Spain; while the remaining forces of that monarchy were dissipated in the south and north of Portugal, in search of elusory acquisitions at the expense of the cabinet of Lisbon. The sentence, at the same time, went forth from the Tuileries, "The house of Braganza has ceased to reign," and the royal family at Lisbon were driven into exile to Brazil; while the Queen of Etruria was obliged to resign the throne of Tuscany, on a promise of an indemnity in the northern provinces of Portugal. Scarcely, however, is the resignation elicited under this promise obtained, when that promise too is broken; the dispossessed Queen, albeit a creation of Napoleon's own, is deprived of her indemnity; the stipulated principality in favour of the Prince of the Peace is cast to the winds; and orders are issued to Junot to administer the government of the whole of Portugal in name of the Emperor Napoleon.

Meanwhile, the French armies rapidly inundate the northern provinces of the Peninsula: the frontier fortresses are seized, in the midst of profound peace, by a power in alliance with Spain, and which, only four months before, had formally guaranteed the integrity of its dominions: a hundred thousand men overspread the provinces

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secured for you a constitution which may establish the sacred and salutary authority of the sovereign, with the liberties and privileges of the people. Spaniards! Reflect on what your fathers were; on what you now are! The fault does not lie in you, but in the constitution by which you have been governed. Conceive the most ardent hopes and confidence in the results of your present situation; for I wish that your latest posterity should preserve the recollection of me and say—*he was the regenerator of our country.*"—
THIBAUDEAU, vi. 390, 391.

87.
His perfidious conduct towards the Spanish princes.

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to the north of the Ebro, and approach the capital. These disastrous events excite the public indignation against the ruling monarch and his unworthy favourite ; they are overthrown by an urban insurrection, and the Prince of Asturias, by universal consent, is called to the throne. No sooner is he apprised of this event, than Napoleon despatches Savary to induce the new King to come to Bayonne, under a solemn assurance, both verbally and in writing, that he would at once recognise him, if the affair at Aranjuez was explained ; and that in a few minutes everything would be satisfactorily adjusted. Agitated between terror and hope, Ferdinand, in an evil hour, and when his capital is occupied by French troops, consents to a step which he had scarcely the means of avoiding, and throws himself on the honour of the French monarch. Napoleon, in the interim, sends for Charles IV. and the Prince of the Peace, and between the terror of his authority and the seductions of his promises, contrives to assemble all the royal family of Spain with their confidential counsellors at Bayonne.

88.
And atrocious treachery at Bayonne, by which the whole was concluded.

No sooner are they arrived than he receives and entertains them in the most hospitable manner, and when they are beginning to indulge the hopes which such flattering conduct was fitted to inspire, suddenly salutes them with the announcement that the house of Bourbon has ceased to reign, and closes this matchless scene of duplicity, fraud, and violence, by extorting, by means of persuasion, menaces, and intimidation, a resignation of the throne from both the father and son, whom he had so recently solemnly bound himself to maintain in their possessions ! To crown the whole, while alluring, like the serpent, his victims into his power, he is secretly offering their dominions to one of his brothers after another ; he is, underhand, holding out promises of support both to the old and the new King of Spain, and he has all the while irrevocably resolved upon the dethronement of both, and upon supplanting the house of Bourbon by that of

Buonaparte in both the thrones of the Peninsula. He concludes by sending Charles IV. and Ferdinand, with all their family, into state captivity in the interior of France; discarding Godoy without his stipulated principality; cheating the Queen of Etruria out of her promised indemnity; disinheriting at once the regal families of Spain, Portugal, and Etruria, and placing his own brother on the throne of the Peninsula, in virtue of a determination formed, by his own admission, at the treaty of Tilsit!

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Was, then, such atrocious conduct as successful in the end as it was in the commencement? and did the dynasty of Napoleon reap in its final results benefits or injury from acquisitions obtained by so black a course of perfidy? Let the answer be given in his own words—" *It was that unhappy war in Spain which ruined me.* The results have irrevocably proved that I was in the wrong. There were serious faults in the execution. One of the greatest was that of having attached so much importance to the dethronement of the Bourbons. Charles IV. was worn out; I might have given a liberal constitution to the Spanish nation, and charged Ferdinand with its execution. If he put it in force in good faith, Spain would have prospered, and put itself in harmony with our new institutions; if he failed in the performance of his engagements, he would have met with his dismissal from the Spaniards themselves. The unfortunate war in Spain proved a real wound, *the first cause of the misfortunes of France.* If I could have foreseen that that affair would have caused me so much vexation and chagrin, I would never have engaged in it. *But after the first steps taken in the affair, it was impossible for me to recede.* When I saw those *imbeciles* quarrelling and trying to dethrone each other, I thought I might as well take advantage of it to dispossess an inimical family; but I was not the contriver of their disputes. Had I known at the first that the transaction would have given me so

89.
Ultimate
consequences of
this atrocious
conduct to
Napoleon
and his
house.

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much trouble, I would never have attempted it.”* “He was drawn on,” says M. Thiers, “from chicanery to perfidy, and came to affix to his name a spot which has for ever tarnished his glory. He had no means left of expiating his fault but by the good which he might do to Spain, and through it to France. But Providence did not reserve for him even that expiation. The pages which follow will show how its terrible justice, *worked out of the consequences of these very events*, punished genius, which, not less than mediocrity, is subject to the laws of honour and good sense.”†

1 Las Cas.
iv. 204, 205.
O'Meara,
ii. 167.

* The assertion here made, and which was frequently repeated by Napoleon, that he was not the author of the family disputes between Charles IV. and Ferdinand, but merely stepped in to dispossess them both, was perfectly well founded, and is quite consistent with all the facts stated in the preceding deduction. It is evident, also, that such was the fascination produced by his power and talents, that little difficulty was experienced in getting the royal family of Spain to throw themselves into his hands; nay, that there was rather a race between the father and son which should first arrive at his headquarters, to state their case favourably to that supreme arbiter of their fate. That Savary was sent to Madrid and again back to Vitoria, to induce Ferdinand to come to Bayonne, was admitted by himself,² but he evidently had no great difficulty in accomplishing his task. But the real reproach against Napoleon, and that from which he has never attempted to exculpate himself, is his having first agreed with Alexander at Tilsit to dispossess the houses of Braganza and Bourbon; then, to lull asleep the latter power, signed the treaty of Fontainebleau, which guaranteed its dominions; then perfidiously seized its fortresses without a shadow of pretext; and finally taking advantage of the family dissensions to attract both the old King and his son to Bayonne, where they were compelled to abdicate.

2 De Pradt,
73.

Long as the preceding narrative of the causes which led to the Peninsular war has proved, it will not by the intelligent reader be deemed misplaced, when the vital importance of the facts it contains, both to the issue of the contest and the elucidation of the character of Napoleon, is taken into view, the more especially as it has hitherto not met with the attention it deserves from English historians. Colonel Napier, in particular, dismisses the whole subject in a few pages; and blames Napoleon, not for attacking Spain, but chiefly, if not entirely, for not attacking it in the interests of democracy. “There are many reasons,” says this energetic and eloquent writer, “why Napoleon should have meddled with the interior affairs of Spain; there seems to be no good one for his manner of doing it. His great error was, that he looked only to the court, and treated the people with contempt. Had he taken care to bring the people and their government into hostile contact first, instead of appearing as the treacherous arbitrator of a domestic quarrel, he would have been hailed as the deliverer of a great people.”—NAPIER, i. 22, 23. In energy and fire of military description, and ability of scientific disquisition, the gallant Colonel is above all praise; but he is far from being equally safe as a guide to political events, or as a judge of the measures of government.

† THIERS, viii. 658.

The fact thus admitted by Napoleon, and clearly proved by his history, that the Spanish war was the principal cause of his ruin, is one of the most luminous examples which the annals of the world exhibit of the subjection of human affairs to the direction of an overruling Power, which makes the passions and vices of men the instrument of their own punishment. So far as mere worldly policy was concerned, and on the supposition that there were no moral feelings in mankind, which cannot for a length of time be outraged with impunity, there can be no doubt that he judged wisely in attempting, by any means, the extension of his dynasty over the Peninsula. The reasons of state policy which rendered it essential for Louis XIV. to face the strength of banded Europe in order to maintain the Family Compact in the Peninsula, were still more forcibly applicable to Napoleon, as his dynasty was a revolutionary one, and could not hope to obtain lasting support except from sovereigns whose thrones rested on a similar foundation. How, then, did it happen that a step recommended by so clear a principle of expedience, and attended by the most unhopd-for success in the first instance, should ultimately have been attended with such disaster? Simply because it was throughout based on injustice; because it violated the moral feelings of mankind, outraged their national attachments, and roused all classes by the overbearing excitement of the generous emotions into an unreflecting, it may almost be called, an instinctive resistance.

In the final success of that resistance, in the memorable retribution which it at last brought on the principal actors in the drama which began with such apparently undeserved success, is to be discerned the clearest proof of the manner in which Providence works out the moral government of the world, and renders the guilt and long-continued success of the wicked the instruments of their own ultimate and well-deserved punishment. When the Spaniards beheld Napoleon sending their princes into

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LII.

1808.

90.

Its apparent
wisdom, so
far as human
policy is
concerned.

91.

And the
ultimate
punishment
it brought
about.

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1808.

captivity and wresting from them their crown, from themselves their independence; when they saw Murat in triumph extinguishing the Madrid insurrection in blood, and securely massacring her gallant citizens after the fight was over, they sank and wept in silence, and possibly doubted the reality of the Divine superintendence of human affairs, when such crimes were permitted to bring nothing but increase of power and authority to their perpetrators. But mark the end of these things, and the consequences of these atrocities upon their authors, by a series of causes and effects, every one of which now stands forth in imperishable light. Napoleon, who then sent an unoffending race of monarchs into captivity, was himself, by its results, driven into lasting and melancholy exile: France, which then lent its aid to a perfidious and unjust invasion, was itself, from its effects, subjected to a severe and galling subjugation: Murat, who then with impunity massacred the innocent by the mockery of military trial, signed, in the order for their condemnation, the warrant for his own dethronement and execution not eight years afterwards!

92.
The passions
of the Re-
volution
were the
real causes
of the dis-
asters both
of Europe
and France.

In authorising or committing these enormous state crimes, Napoleon and France were in truth acting in conformity to that moral law of the universe, which dooms outrageous vice, whether in nations or individuals, to prepare, in the efforts which it makes for its present gratification or advancement, the means of its ultimate punishment. Napoleon constantly said, and said truly, that he was not to be blamed for the wars which he undertook; that he was driven on by necessity; that he was always placed in the alternative of further triumphs or immediate ruin; that he was in truth the head of a military republic, which would admit no pause to its dictator in the career of victory.*

* "Throughout my whole reign," said Napoleon, "I was the keystone of an edifice entirely new, and resting on the most slender foundations. Its duration depended on the issue of my battles. If I had been conquered at Marengo, the disastrous times of 1814 and 1815 would immediately have come on. It was the same at Austerlitz, Jena, and other fields. The vulgar accuse my ambition

There is no one who attentively considers his career but must admit the justice of these observations, and absolve him individually, in consequence, from much of that obloquy which the spectacle of the dreadful and desolating wars, in which he was so powerful an agent, has naturally produced among mankind. But that just indignation at the profuse and unprofitable effusion of blood, which has been erroneously directed by a large and influential class in France to the single head of Napoleon, should not on that account be supposed to be ill-founded. The feeling is just—the object only of it is mistaken. Its true object is that selfish spirit of revolutionary aggrandisement, which merely changed its direction, not its character, under the military dictatorship of the French Emperor ; which hesitates at no crimes, pauses at no consequences ; which, unsatiated by the blood and suffering it had produced in its own country, sought abroad, under his triumphant banners, the means of still greater gratification ; and never ceased to urge on its remorseless career, till the world was filled with its devastation, and the unanimous indignation of mankind was aroused for its punishment.

as the cause of all these wars ; but they, in truth, arose from the nature of things, and that constant struggle of the past and the present, which placed me continually in the alternative of conquering, under pain of being beaten down. *I was never, in truth, master of my own movements ; I was never at my own disposal. At the commencement of my elevation, during the Consulate, my partisans frequently asked me, with the best intentions, whither I was tending, and I constantly answered with perfect sincerity, I did not know. They were astonished, but I said no more than the simple truth. My ambition, I admit, was great, but it was of a frigid nature, and caused by the opinion of the masses. During all my reign, the supreme direction of affairs really lay with the people ; in fact, the imperial government was a kind of republic.*—LAS CASES, vi. 41, vii. 125 ; O'MEARA, i. 405.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE SPANISH PENINSULA AT THE OPENING OF THE WAR.

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.
1.
Memorable
events of
which the
Spanish
peninsula
has been
the theatre.

THE Spanish peninsula, in which a frightful war was now about to commence, and where the armies of France and England at last found a permanent theatre of combat, has been distinguished from the earliest times by memorable achievements, and rendered illustrious by the exploits of many of the greatest captains who have ever left the impress of their actions on the course of human events. The mighty genius of Hannibal there began its career, and under the walls of Saguntum gave the earliest indication of that vast capacity which was soon to shake to its foundation the enduring fabric of Roman power. In it Scipio Africanus first revived the almost desperate fortunes of the republic, and matured those talents which were destined on a distant shore to overthrow the fortunes of the inveterate enemy of his country. The talents of Pompey, the capacity of Sertorius, the genius of Cæsar, were exerted on its plains. A severer struggle than that of Pharsalia awaited the founder of the empire on the shores of the Ebro. The desperate contest between the Cross and the Crescent raged for centuries amidst its mountains, and from their rocks the wave of Mussulman conquest was first permanently repelled. Nor has the Peninsula been in modern times the theatre of less memorable exploits. The standards of Charlemagne have waved in its passes; the bugles of Roncesvalles

have resounded through the world; the chivalry of the Black Prince, the skill of Gonzalvo of Cordova, have been displayed in its defence. The genius of Napoleon, the firmness of Wellington, have been exerted on its plains; and, like their great predecessors in the wars of Rome and Carthage, these two illustrious chiefs rolled the chariot of victory over its surface, and, missing each other, severally conquered every other opponent, till their mutual renown filled the world, and Europe, in breathless suspense, awaited the issue of their conflict on another shore.

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From the earliest times, the inhabitants of the Peninsula have been distinguished by a peculiarity of military character and mode of conducting war which is very remarkable. Inferior to many other nations in the firmness and discipline with which they withstand the shock of battle, they are superior to them all in the readiness with which they rally after defeat, and the invincible tenacity with which they maintain a contest under circumstances of disaster, when any other people would succumb in despair. In vain are their armies defeated and dispersed, their fortresses taken, their plains overrun, their capital subdued. Singly, or in small bodies, they renew the conflict; they rally and reunite as rapidly as they disperse; the numerous mountain chains which intersect their country afford a refuge for their broken bands; their cities make a desperate though insulated defence; and from the wreck of all regular or organised opposition emerges the redoubtable GUERILLA warfare. "Prælio victi Carthaginenses," says Livy, "in ultimam Hispaniæ oram, ad oceanum, compulsi erant—disparem autem; quod Hispania, non quam Italia modo, sed quam ulla pars terrarum, bello reparando aptior erat, locorum hominumque ingeniis. Gens nata instaurandis reparandisque bellis brevi replevit exercitum, animosque ad tentandum de integro certamen fecit."* It is a singular fact, strik-

2.
Uniform
and singular
character of
its guerilla
warfare.

* "The Carthaginians, conquered in battle, were driven into the farthest

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1808.

ingly illustrative of the durable influence of common descent and physical circumstances on national character, through all the varieties of time, religion, and political condition, that the system of warfare, thus deemed peculiar to Spain, of all nations in the world, in the days of Pompey and Sertorius, has continued to distinguish its inhabitants, without any interruption, to the present time. It was pursued without intermission for eight hundred years in their wars with the Moors, formed the characteristic of the struggle with Napoleon, and continued afterwards to be the leading feature of the savage contest between the aristocratic and democratic parties, which for so many years bathed the Peninsula in blood.

3.
Physical
conforma-
tion of the
country,
which has
led to these
effects.

Durable characteristics of this kind attaching for ages to a nation, though its inhabitants have in the course of them become the mixed progeny of many different tribes of mankind, will invariably be found to arise from some peculiarity in its physical circumstances, or some distinctive mental quality in its predominant races, which has imprinted a lasting character on all its successive inhabitants. This is in an especial manner the case with Spain and Portugal. Their territory differs in many important particulars from any in Europe. Physically considered, it belongs as much to Africa as Europe. The same burning sun parches the mountains and dries up the valleys of both; no forests clothe their sides; naked, they present their arid fronts to the shivering blasts of the north and the scorching rays of a tropical sun. Vegetation in general spreads in proportion only as irrigation can be obtained. Aided by that powerful auxiliary, the steepest mountain sides of Catalonia and Aragon are cut into terraces and clothed with the most luxuriant vegetation:

provinces of Spain next the ocean. But these were unlike all other places; for Spain is better adapted, not merely than Italy, but than any part of the world, for repairing defeat, not merely by the nature of the country, but the disposition of the people. A nation born for restoring the fortune and repairing the losses of wars, speedily refilled the ranks, and inspired the spirit to renew the contest."—LIVY.

without it, vast plains in Leon and the Castiles are almost entirely destitute both of cultivation and inhabitants. So extensive in consequence are the desert tracts of Spain, that the country, viewed from the summit of any of the numerous mountain ridges with which its inland provinces are intersected, in general exhibits only a confused group of barren elevated plains and lofty naked peaks, intersected here and there by a few glittering streams flowing in deep valleys, only on the margins of which are to be seen crops and flocks, and the traces of human habitation. A feeling of melancholy steals over the mind in traversing its wide and broken plains : the general sterility is allied to sublimity ; and, amidst the desolation of nature, deep impressions are made, and a lofty character communicated to the mind.¹

The whole Peninsula may be viewed as a vast mountainous promontory, which stretches from the Pyrenees to the southward, between the Atlantic and Mediterranean seas. On the shores of the ridge to the east and west are plains of admirable fertility, which at no distant period have emerged from the waves of the sea ; but in the interior an elevated assemblage of mountain ridges and lofty desert plains is to be found, the external slopes of which were once washed by the ocean, in the centre of which Madrid is placed in an upland basin at a height of eighteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. This lofty plateau consists of immense dry plains, scorched by a burning sun in summer, swept by frozen blasts in winter. Over these vast expanses the habitations are rare, towns or villages still rarer, and the only animated beings in general to be seen are vast flocks of sheep, tended by huge dogs and fierce but manly shepherds. The inhabitants of these elevated regions partake of the stern and melancholy character of the scenery by which they are surrounded. They are grave, silent, and thoughtful ; but, like all persons of that temperament, capable, when roused, of heroic actions, and deeply imbued

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LIII.

1808.

¹ Suchet's
Mem. i. 42,
47. Nap. i.
52, 53. La-
borde, i. 163.
Borrow's
Bible in
Spain, ii.
117.

4.
General
character
of the Pen-
insula.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

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LIII.

1808.

with romantic feelings. The great rivers from the elevation of this plateau flow for the most part to the east and west in long courses, and are fed by tributary streams, which meander at the bottom of ravines of surprising depth, shut in often by precipitous banks or very steep declivities. Three great chaussées only—viz. that leading from Madrid to Bayonne by the Somo-Sierra pass, that to Valencia, and that to Barcelona—intersect this great central desert region. In every other quarter the roads are little better than mountain paths, uniting together towns built for the most part on the summit of hills, surrounded by walls, environed by superb olive woods, but having little intercourse either with each other or with the rest of Europe. It may readily be imagined what extraordinary advantages a country of such natural strength and character must afford to insulated and defensive warfare.¹

¹ Suchet's
Mem. i. 42,
49. Nap.
i. 52, 53.
Laborde's
Spain, i.
163, 169,
Introd.
Thiers, viii.
480, 481.

5.
Statistics
of Spain,
and its
leading fea-
tures.

Spain contains 23,850 square geographical leagues, or about 214,000 square geographical miles, being more than double the superficies of the British islands. It was inhabited in 1808 by eleven millions, which in 1834 had risen to 14,660,000 souls. Its revenue in 1826 was 105,000,000 francs, or £4,200,000; in 1833, 162,000,000, or £6,500,000 sterling; and its public debt, 4,000,000,000 francs, or £160,000,000. Its agriculture produces 1,847,000,000 francs, or £74,000,000 sterling annually. The total yearly produce of its industry, agricultural and commercial, is 2,250,000,000 francs, or £90,000,000; facts indicating at once the disordered state of its finances, and the vast amount of its physical resources. In 1808 the revenue was 126,000,000 francs, or about £5,000,000; the expenditure 159,000,000 francs, or £6,400,000; the public debt about £50,000,000 sterling. The surface of the country, generally speaking, is arid, rocky, and sterile, unless aided by irrigation—which, however, whenever it can be obtained, produces, under its genial sun, luxuriant vegetation. Vast tracts, especially in Leon, Castile, and

Estremadura, have from time immemorial been devoted to pasturage; over their dry and unenclosed expanses immense flocks of sheep constantly wander, the wool of which is celebrated all over the world for the fineness of its texture. Such is the wealth and influence of the owners of these flocks, that it has enabled them to perpetuate for centuries the privileges of the *Mesta*, so ruinous to agriculture, by which they are permitted to wander at pleasure over nearly the whole extent of the kingdom. In some alluvial plains, as those of Valencia, the Llobregat in Catalonia, and the banks of the Guadalquivir in Andalusia, the soil is of surpassing fertility, and the crops rival those of Lombardy or the Campagna of Naples in variety and richness. Manufactures, with a few exceptions, are in every part of the country in a state of infancy.¹

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1808.

¹ Malte
Brun, vii.
665, 666.
Thier-, viii.
275, 481.

In almost every quarter, the Peninsula is intersected by long rocky and almost inaccessible mountain ridges, which form a barrier between province and province, almost as complete, not merely to hostile armies, but even to the inhabitants of the country, as is that interposed by the Alps or the Pyrenees. Branching out from the great chain which separates France from Spain, one vast assemblage of mountains runs to the westward, forming in its course the Alpine nests and inaccessible retreats of Asturias and Galicia; while another, stretching to the eastward, covers with its various ramifications nearly the whole of Catalonia, and encloses in its bosom the admirable industry and persevering efforts of its hardy cultivators. In the interior of the hills which descend from the crest of the Pyrenees to the long vale of the Ebro, are formed the beautiful and umbrageous valleys of Navarre and Biscay, where, in mountain fastnesses and amidst chestnut forests, liberty has for six hundred years diffused its blessings, and the prodigy has been exhibited of independent privileges and democratic equality having been preserved untouched, with all their attendant secu-

6.
Great mountain ranges
of Spain and
Portugal.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

¹ Malte
Brun, vii.
647, 651,
659, 664.
Laborde,
i. 168, 170.
Thiers, viii.
480.

city and general comfort, under an otherwise despotic monarchy. Beyond the Ebro, one great mountain range, stretching across from the frontiers of Catalonia to the neighbourhood of Lisbon, forms the almost impassable barrier between the valleys of the Tagus and the Douro, and the provinces of Old and New Castile, Leon, and Estremadura. Its western extremity has been immortalised in history; it contains the ridge of Busaco, and terminates in the rocks of Torres-Vedras.¹

7.
Those in the
south of
Spain.

Another, taking its rise from the high grounds which form the western limit of the plain of Valencia, extends in a south-westerly direction to Cape St Vincent in the south of Portugal, and separates in its course the valleys of the Tagus and the Guadiana. A third, also reaching in the same direction across the whole country, forms the boundary between the valleys of the Guadiana and the Guadalquivir, under the name of the Sierra-Morena, divides the province of New Castile from that of Andalusia, and has been immortalised as the scene of the wanderings of the hero of Cervantes. A fourth, detached by itself in the southern extremity of the Peninsula, forms the romantic mountains of Ronda, whose summits, wrapped in perpetual snow, withstand the genial sun which ripens oranges and citrons and all the productions of Africa on their sides. Two great and rich alluvial plains alone are to be found in Spain, the character of whose inhabitants differs from that of all the rest of the Peninsula: in the first of which, amidst water-melons, luxuriant harvests, and all the richest gifts of nature, the castanets and evening dances of the Valencians present the unforeseeing gaiety of tropical regions; while in the second, the indolent habits, fiery character, and impetuous disposition of the Andalusians attest, amidst myrtle thickets, the perfume of orange groves, and the charms of a delicious climate, the undecaying influence of Moorish blood and Arabian descent.²

² Malte
Brun, vii.
494, 500.
Humboldt,
Geog. de
l'Espagne,
in Laborde,
i. 170, 175.
Lord Caernarvon's
Spain, ii.
234, 270.

Spain has never been remarkable for the number or

opulence of its towns: Madrid, Cadiz, Valencia, Barcelona, and Seville, the largest of which, after the capital, does not contain above a hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants, alone deserve the name of cities.* But it has in every age been distinguished beyond any other country recorded in history, by the unconquerable resolution with which their inhabitants have defended their walls, even under circumstances when more prudent courage would have abandoned the contest in despair. The heart of every classical scholar has thrilled at the fate of Numantia, Saguntum, and Astapa, whose heroic defenders preferred perishing with their wives and children in the flames to surrendering to the hated dominion of the stranger; and the same character has characterised their descendants in modern times.† With invincible resolution Barcelona held out for its rights and privileges, after Europe had adjusted its strife at Utrecht, and

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1808.

8.

Extraordinary resolution with which in every age the Spaniards have defended their cities.

* Madrid contained, in 1808, 190,000 inhabitants.—*Edin. Gazetteer*, Art. *Madrid*.

The population of the principal Spanish towns in 1834 was as follows:—

Madrid, . . .	201,000	Lorca, . . .	40,000
Barcelona, . . .	120,000	Jaen, . . .	18,000
Seville, . . .	91,000	Corunna, . . .	18,000
Granada, . . .	80,000	Santander, . . .	18,000
Cadiz, . . .	53,000	Ferrol, . . .	13,000
Valencia, . . .	65,900	Toledo, . . .	15,000
Saragossa, . . .	55,000	Alcala Real, . . .	14,000
Malaga, . . .	52,000	Port de Marie, near Cadiz, . . .	17,000
Cordova, . . .	46,000	Almeria, . . .	19,000
Murcia, . . .	35,000	Antequera, . . .	20,000
Ecija, . . .	34,000	Ronda, . . .	18,000
Valladolid, . . .	32,000	Velez Malaga, . . .	14,000
Carthagenæ, . . .	29,000	San Lucar, . . .	16,000
Orihuela, . . .	25,000	Xeres, . . .	31,000
Alicant, . . .	23,000	Tortosa, . . .	13,000

—MALTE BRUN, vii. 661, 663.

† “Locum in foro destinant, quo pretiosissima rerum suarum congererent; super eum cumulum conjuges ac liberos considerare quum jussissent, ligna circa exstruunt, fascisque virgultorum conjiciunt. Fœdior alia in urbe trucidatio erat, quum turbam feminarum puerorumque imbellem inermemque cives sui cæderent, et in succensum rogam semianima pleraque injicerent corpora, rivi- que sanguinis flammam orientem restinguerent; postremo ipsi, cæde miserandâ suorum fatigati, cum armis medio se incendio injecerunt.”—LIVY, xxviii. c. 22, 23. Numantia and Saguntum have become household words over the world, but the heroism of ASTAPA here narrated has not received the fame it deserves.

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1808.

England, with perfidious policy, had abandoned her Peninsular allies to the arms of their enemies. The double siege of Saragossa, the heroic defence of Gerona, the obstinate stand at Rosas, have put the warriors of northern Europe to the blush for the facility with which they surrendered fortresses to the invader, incomparably stronger and better provided with arms and garisons; while Cadiz alone of almost all European towns successfully resisted the utmost efforts of the spoiler, and, after a fruitless siege of two years, saw the arms even of Napoleon roll back.

9.
Peculiarities in the civil history of the Peninsula which have rendered it a divided community.

The peculiar political constitution of the Spanish monarchy, and the revolutions which its inhabitants have undergone in the course of ages, have been as favourable to the maintenance of a defensive and isolated internal, as they were prejudicial to the prosecution of a vigorous external warfare by its government. Formed by the amalgamation at various times of many different nations of separate descent, habits, and religion, it has never yet attained the vigour and unity of a homogeneous monarchy. Its inhabitants are severed from each other, not only by desert ridges or rocky sierras, but by original separation of race and inveterate present animosity. The descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the Spanish soil are there mingled with the children of the Goth, the Vandal, and the Roman; with the faithlessness of Moorish blood, or the fire of Arabian descent. These different and hostile races have never thoroughly amalgamated. For many centuries they maintained separate and independent governments, and kept up prolonged and bloody warfare with each other; and when at length they all yielded to the arms and fortune of Ferdinand and Isabella, the central government neither acquired the popular infusion nor the inherent energy which is necessary to mould out of such discordant materials a vigorous state. The peculiar character of the people formed by this singular blending of so many different

races in their progenitors, is chiefly to be seen in the inhabitants of the country. The Spanish peasant has no resemblance either to the French, the English, or the German. He has neither the gaiety of the former, nor the perseverance of the latter. He unites the individual energy of the Turk or the Arab to the religious and political passions of the European. He is not worn out, like the labourers of most other countries, by incessant toil, nor occupied with the exclusive care of amassing money. Indolent, when not roused by passion, in towns; wandering for the most part over vast plains after flocks of sheep, or pursuing the more gainful trade of smuggling, he is ever ready to join in his favourite amusements of dancing or bull-fighting, or to listen to heart-stirring tales of ancient days, or share in the political passions of the present moment.¹

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1808.

¹ Thiers,
viii. 481.

The example of Great Britain, where the various and hostile races of the Britons, the Saxons, the Danes, Scots, and Normans, have been at length blended into one united and powerful monarchy, proves that such an amalgamation is possible; that of Ireland, where the Saxon and the Gael are still in fierce and ruinous hostility with each other, that it is one of the most difficult of political problems. Without the freedom of the English constitution, which unites them by the powerful bond of experienced benefits and participated power, or the crushing vigour of the Russian despotism, which holds them close in the bands of rising conquest, it is hardly possible to give to such a mixed race the vigour of homogeneous descent. In Spain this had never been attempted, and, if attempted, it would probably have proved unsuccessful. The Aragonese were jealous of the Catalonians; the Castilians despised the Valencians; the Galicians even were at variance with the Asturians; and the freeborn mountaineers of Navarre and Biscay had their local antipathies. All the inhabitants of the north regarded as an inferior race the natives of Grenada and Andalusia, where Moorish

10.
It has never
been tho-
roughly
amalgama-
ted.

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1808.

conquest had degraded the character, and Moorish blood contaminated the descent of the people; and where, amidst orange groves, evening serenades, and bewitching forms, the whole manly virtues were thought to be fast wearing out under the enervating influence of an African sun.

11.
Effect of
these cir-
cumstances
in promot-
ing the
means of
internal and
separate
defence.

But while these circumstances were destructive to the external vigour and consideration of the Spanish monarchy, they were, of all others, those best calculated to enable its inhabitants, when deprived of their central government and left to their own guidance, to oppose a formidable resistance to the invader. When deprived of the direction of their sovereign, the provinces of Spain did not feel themselves powerless, nor did they lose hope because abandoned by those who were their natural protectors. Society, when resolved into its pristine elements, still found wherewithal to combat; the provinces, when loosened or severed from each other, separately maintained the contest. Electing juntas of government, and enrolling forces on their own account, they looked as little beyond their own limits as the Swiss peasants in former times did beyond the mountain ridges which formed the barriers of their happy valleys. If this singular oblivion of external events, and concentration of all their energies on local concerns, was subversive in the end of any combined plan of operations, and effectually prevented the national strength from being hurled, in organised and concentrated masses, against the enemy, it was eminently favourable, in the first instance, to the efforts of tumultuary resistance, and led to the assumption of arms, and the continuance of the conflict, under circumstances when a well-informed central government would probably have resigned it in despair. Defeats in one quarter did not lead to submission in another. Their general ignorance, haughty pride, and unconquerable prejudices, led them to prolong the contest under circumstances when well-informed reason

would probably have abandoned it. The occupation of the capital, the fortresses, the military lines of communication, was not decisive of the fate of the country; as many victories required to be gained as there were cities to be captured or provinces subdued; and, like the Anglo-Saxons in the days of the English heptarchy, they fought resolutely in their separate districts, and rose up again in arms when the invader had passed on to fresh theatres of conquest. In every age they have verified the character given of them by the ancient historian, that alone of all the provinces of the empire, Spain became sensible of its strength after it had been conquered.*

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1808.

The nobility in Spain, as in all countries where civilisation and wealth have long existed, and the salutary check of popular control has not developed their energy and restrained their corruption, were, when the French war broke out, sunk in the lowest state of selfish degradation. Assembled for the most part in the capital, devoted to the frivolities of fashion, or the vices of a court; taught to look for the means of elevation, not in the energy of a virtuous, but the intrigues of a corrupted life, they were alike unfit for civil or military exertion. The nobility of Spain, alone of the European states, must, with a few brilliant exceptions, be considered as strangers to the glories of the Revolutionary war. Not more than three or four of the higher grandes were in the army when the war broke out in 1808; and the inferior noblesse, almost all destitute alike of education, vigour, or active habits, took hardly any share in its prosecution. The original evil of entails had spread to a greater extent, and produced more pernicious consequences in Spain than in any other country of Europe;¹ a few great families engrossed more than half the landed property of the kingdom, which was effectually tied up from alienation,

12.
Corruption
of the no-
bility, and
extent to
which en-
tails were
carried.

¹ Foy, iii.
151, 152.
Jovellanos,
164. La-
borde, i.
197, 212.

* "Sola omnium provinciarum, Hispania postquam victa est vires suas intellexit."—FLORUS, p. 62.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

and of course remained in a very indifferent state of cultivation; while the domains of the cities or corporate bodies, held in mortmain, and for the most part uncultivated, were so extensive, that a large proportion of the arable land in the kingdom still remained in a state of nature.

13.
State of the
peasantry.

Notwithstanding these unfavourable circumstances, the elements of great political activity and energetic national conduct existed in the Peninsula. The peasantry were everywhere an athletic, sober, enduring race; hardy from exercise, abstemious from habit, capable of undergoing incredible fatigue, and of subsisting on fare which to an Englishman would appear absolute starvation. The officers in the Spanish armies during the war, drawn from the ill-educated urban classes, were for the most part a most conceited, ignorant, and inefficient body; but the men were almost always excellent, and possessed not only the moral spirit, but the physical qualities, calculated to become the basis of an admirable army. Colonel Napier has recorded his opinion that the Catalonian Miquelets or smugglers formed the finest materials for light troops in the world, and the Valencian and Andalusian levies presented a physical appearance greatly exceeding that of both the French and English regular armies.* The cause of this remarkable peculiarity is to be found in the independent spirit and general well-being of the peasantry. Notwithstanding all the internal defects of their government and institutions, the shepherds and cultivators of the soil enjoyed a most remarkable degree of prosperity. Their dress, their houses, their habits of life, demonstrated the long-established comfort which had for ages prevailed among them; vast tracts, particularly in the mountainous regions of the north, were the property of the cultivators — a state of things of all others the most favourable to social happiness,¹ when accompanied with a tolerable

¹ Lord Caernarvon's Spain, ii. 234, 360. Burgoyne's Espagne, i. 267; ii. 384.

* I heard Lord Lynedoch, then Sir Thomas Graham, express this opinion in 1809, immediately after the retreat of Sir John Moore, in which he bore a part.

degree of mildness in the practical administration of government ; and even in those districts where they were merely tenants of the nobility, the cities, or the church, their condition demonstrated that they were permitted to retain an ample share of the fruits of their toil.

The general comfort of the Spanish peasantry, especially in the northern and mountainous provinces, is easily explained by the number of them who were owners of the soil, coupled with the vigour and efficacy of the provincial immunities and privileges which, in Catalonia, Navarre, the Basque Provinces, Asturias, Aragon, and Galicia, effectually restrained the power of the executive, and gave to the inhabitants of those districts the practical enjoyment of almost complete personal freedom. So extensive were their privileges, so little did government venture to disregard them, that in many cases those enjoying them were to be considered rather as democratic commonwealths, inserted into that extraordinary assemblage of separate states which formed the Spanish monarchy, than as subjects of a despotic government. The classification of the population was as in the note below, which speaks volumes as to the condition of the people, and the causes of their prolonged resistance to the French invasion.^{1*}

But the peasantry, hardy and undaunted as they were, would have been unable to have combined in any effective league for their common defence, destitute as they for the most part were of any support from their natural leaders,

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LIII.
1808.

14.
Statistical
details on
this subject.

¹ Hard. x.
173, 174.

15.
The church:
its influence
and cha-
racter.

* Total inhabitants,	10,409,879
Of whom were Families engaged in agriculture,	872,000
" " Owners of the soil they cultivated,	360,000
" " Farmers holding under landlords,	502,000
" " Ecclesiastical proprietors,	6,216
" " Parish priests,	22,480
" " Regular clergy,	47,710
Total cities, towns, and villages,	25,463
Of which were Free cities or burghs,	12,071
" " Subject to a feudal superior,	9,466
" " Subject to an ecclesiastical superior,	3,926

—See HARDENBERG, x. 173, 174.

The population is now (1837) 14,660,000.—MALTE BRUN, vii. 664.

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¹ Laborde,
iv. 194.² Malte
Brun, vii.
667, 672.16.
Its immense
usefulness to
the people.

the owners of the soil, if it had not been for the weight and influence of a body which, in every age, has borne a leading part in the contests of the Peninsula. This was THE CHURCH, the lasting and inveterate enemy in every country of revolutionary innovation. The ecclesiastics in Spain were very numerous, amounting, according to the census taken in 1787, to twenty-two thousand four hundred and eighty parish priests, and forty-seven thousand seven hundred and ten regular clergy belonging to monasteries or other public religious establishments.¹ The influence of this great body was immense. Independent of their spiritual ascendancy in a country more strongly attached than any in Europe to the Romish church, they possessed, as temporal proprietors, an unbounded sway over their flocks. As in all other countries, it had long been felt that the church was the best and most indulgent landlord; the ecclesiastical estates, which were very numerous and extensive, were much better cultivated in general than any in the hands of lay proprietors; and the tenantry held their possessions under them for such moderate rents, and by so secure a tenure, that they had long enjoyed almost the advantages and consideration of actual landholders.²

Nor was this all: the charity and beneficence of the monks had set on foot, in every part of the country, extensive institutions, through which, more than any others by which they could be effected, the distresses of the poor had been relieved. They partook in a great degree of the character of the *hospice*, particularly in the northern provinces. To the peasant they often served as banking establishments, where none other existed in the province, and as such essentially contributed to agricultural improvement. The friars acted as schoolmasters, advocates, physicians, and apothecaries. Besides feeding and clothing the poor, and visiting the sick, they afforded spiritual consolation. They were considerate landlords and indulgent masters; peace-makers in domestic broils,

a prop of support in family misfortune ; they provided periodical amusements and festivities for the peasants ; advanced them funds if assailed with misfortune ; furnished them with seed if their harvest had failed. Most of the convents had *fundaciones*, or endowments, for professors who taught rhetoric and philosophy, besides keeping schools open for the use of the poor ; they also supplied parochial ministers when wanted, and their preachers were considered the best in Spain. Superficial or free-thinking travellers, observing that the aged, the sick, and the destitute, were always to be found in numbers round the convent gates, supposed that they created the suffering which they were so instrumental in relieving, and in consequence that the church was chargeable with the augmentation of pauperism ; forgetting that the poor ever will be assembled together round those establishments where their sufferings are relieved ; and that to represent such beneficent institutions as the cause of this distress, is just as absurd as it would be to decry fever hospitals because their wards are generally filled with typhus patients, or poor-laws in Ireland because a large proportion of its *two millions* of present destitute inhabitants will hereafter infallibly be found in the neighbourhood of the workhouses where parochial relief is dealt out.¹

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¹ Walton's
Revolutions
of Spain, ii.
374, 376.

It is observed with surprise by General Foy, that in every age the king, the church, and the people, have combined together in Spain : an alliance utterly inexplicable on the principles of the French revolutionary school, but susceptible of an easy solution when the benefits which the ecclesiastical bodies conferred both on the crown, in standing between it and the encroachments of the nobility, and the peasantry, in averting from them the evils of poverty, are taken into consideration. The whole course of events, during the Peninsular war, demonstrated that this influence was established on the most durable foundation. Everywhere the parish priests were the

17.
Its great
influence in
the Spanish
contest.

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chief promoters of the insurrection ; it was their powerful voice which roused the people to resistance ; and many of the most renowned leaders of the desultory bands who maintained the contest when the regular forces were destroyed, came from the ecclesiastical ranks. The clergy, both regular and parochial, early perceived the total destruction of their interests which would ensue from the triumph of the French invasion ; they recollected the decrees of the Convention against the clergy, and the horrors of the war in la Vendée. And though Napoleon had to a certain extent restored the altar, yet they were well aware that even his powerful hand had been able to do this only in a very ineffectual manner. They knew that religion was tolerated in France, not re-established ; and that the indigent curés, who to the north of the Pyrenees drew a wretched pittance yearly from the public treasury, were very different, both in consideration and influence, from the dignified clergy in possession of their own estates, who formerly constituted so important a part of the French monarchy. It was this body, possessed of such influence, and animated with such feelings, who in Spain proved the real leaders of the people ; who, in the absence of the government, the nobility, and the army, boldly threw themselves into the breach ; and, organising out of the strength and affections of an intrepid peasantry the means of prolonged resistance, rendered the Peninsula the charnel-house of the French armies, and the grave of revolutionary power.

18.

Spain was still unexhausted by revolutionary passions.

Most of all, Spain was still a virgin soil. Her people were not exhausted with revolutionary passions ; they had not learned by bitter experience the vanity of all attempts to regenerate mankind by any other means than the improvement of their moral and religious principles. Though the monarchy was gray in years, the nobility corrupt or selfish, the government feeble and incapable, the nation as a whole was still untainted : the debility of the Bourbon reigns had passed over the state

without either weakening the force of popular passion, or destroying the fountains of public virtue. The peasants in the mountains, the shepherds in the plains, still inherited, in unmixed purity, the blood of the Cid and Pelajo—still were animated by the spirit which sustained the conflict of seven centuries with the Moorish invader. They were free from that last and worst cause of national corruption, which springs from the people having been themselves admitted to a share of power, participating in its passions, feeling its sweets, profiting by its corruptions. They were exempt from that despair which results from the experienced impossibility, by changing the class which governs, of eradicating either the vices of the governors, or the sufferings of the governed. Hence an intermixture in the Peninsular revolutionary war of passions the most opposite, and usually ranged in fierce hostility against each other; and hence the long duration and unexampled obstinacy with which it was conducted. While the rural population, at the voice of their pastors, everywhere took up arms, and rushed with inconsiderate zeal into the conflict, to combat under the banners of the Cross for their salvation, the indolent urban multitudes were roused not less by temporal ambition to league their forces under the national colours. The dissolution of government, the resolution of society into its pristine elements, had generally thrown political power and the immediate direction of affairs into their hands; revolutionary passion, democratic ambition, were called into activity by the very necessity which had everywhere thrown the people upon their own resources. The provincial juntas, chosen in the chief towns, soon became so many centres of revolutionary action and popular intrigue. And thus the two most powerful passions which can agitate the human heart, religious enthusiasm and democratic ambition, usually seen in opposite ranks, and destined to fierce collision in that very realm in future times, were for a season, by the pressure of

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common danger, brought to unite cordially with each other.

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19.

Composition and character of the French army at this period.

Such was the country which thereafter became the grand theatre of the contest between France and England; and such the eminently favourable battle-field which the unbounded ambition and perfidious treachery of the French Emperor at length afforded to the British arms. They now descended to the conflict on the *popular* side; they went forth to combat, not merely for the real interests, but for the present desires of the people. The forces, indeed, which the contending parties could bring into this great arena were, to appearance at least, very unequal; and even the most sanguine could not contemplate without alarm the enormous preponderance which weighed down the scale on the side of Napoleon. He had above six hundred thousand French soldiers, including seventy thousand horse, and at least a hundred and fifty thousand auxiliaries from the allied states at his disposal; but the magnitude of this force, great as it was, constituted the least formidable part of its character.* It was the quality, experience, and spirit of his soldiers which formed the principal source of their strength. They stood forth to the conflict, strong in the experience of fifteen years of warfare, terrible from the recollection of a hundred triumphs. The halo of glory which surrounded, the *prestige* of victory which preceded them, was more difficult to withstand than either the charges of their cuirassiers or the ravages of their artillery. It fascinated and subdued the minds of men; spread universally that

* The numbers were as follows, all paid by the French government:—

Infantry of the line,	380,000
Cavalry,	70,000
Swiss, Germans, Hanoverians, and Irish, in French pay,	32,000
Artillery and engineers,	46,000
Gendarmerie, coast-guards, veterans,	92,000

620,000

Besides the forces of the Confederation of the Rhine, Italy, Naples, Holland, and the grand-duchy of Warsaw—at least 150,000 more.—See Fox, i. 52, 53.

belief of their invincibility which was the surest means of realising it; paralysed alike the statesman who arrayed nations and the general who marshalled armies for the combat; and roused even in the bravest hearts the dispiriting conviction that the contest was hopeless, and that to sink honourably was all that remained to gallant soldiers. This feeling especially prevailed at this juncture, after the hopes of Europe, strongly elevated by the strife of Eylau, had been dashed to the earth by the wreck of Friedland, and the reserve of Christendom, on whom so many eyes had been turned in breathless anxiety, had abandoned the conflict as one apparently striving against the decrees of fate.¹

Nor was the actual efficiency of this immense army inferior to its imaginative terrors. Though the wars of Germany and Poland had made frightful chasms in the ranks of the veteran soldiers, yet the officers and non-commissioned officers, the bones and sinews of the army, possessed the immense advantage of tried merits and long experience. Such had been the consumption of human life during the late campaigns, that every conscript who survived a few years was sure of becoming an officer; and while this certainty of promotion to the few survivors kept alive the military spirit of the whole population, it insured for the direction of the army the inestimable basis of tried valour and experienced skill. Every military man knows, that if the officers and non-commissioned officers are experienced and brave, it is no difficult matter, even out of the most unpromising materials, to form in a short period of time an effective army. The examples of the Portuguese and Hindoos, under British, and the northern Italians, under French officers, were not required to establish a fact illustrated by the experience of every age from the days of the Romans. This advantage appeared not merely in the field of battle; desperate valour, fortunate accident, can sometimes there supply the wants of experience and organisa-

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¹ Foy, i.
52, 53.

20.
Their discipline, equipment, and efficiency.

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tion. But in the long run, in undergoing the fatigues of a campaign, in discharging its multifarious duties, and facing its varied difficulties, the superiority of veteran armies, or even new levies incorporated with a veteran frame, soon becomes conspicuous. The Spaniards never were a match for the French, either in regular combats or in the conduct of a campaign; and although the native courage of the English, even in the outset, uniformly gave them the advantage in pitched battles, yet it was long before they became at all equal to their opponents in the general conduct of a campaign. It augments our admiration for the illustrious chief and his able lieutenants who ultimately led them to victory under such disadvantages, that they were compelled not only to lead, but in a manner to educate their troops in presence of the enemy; and that it was while struggling to maintain their ground against superior bands of a veteran foe, that they imbibed in many respects even the rudiments of the military art.¹

¹ Foy, i. 80,
81. Jom. ii.
36. Hard. x.
157, 158.

21.
Force and
character of
the British
army.

The English army, however, at this period was far from being in the inefficient state, either in respect to discipline or experience, which was generally presumed on the Continent; and the French government, which judged from recent events, and were ignorant of the vast efforts in the military department which had been made since the commencement of the war, were equally mistaken as to the courage and capacity of the regular forces, and the extent to which a warlike spirit had imbued the nation. The British regular troops in the spring of 1808 consisted of nearly two hundred thousand men, of whom twenty-six thousand were cavalry, besides eighty thousand militia, equal in discipline and equipment to the troops of the line, though not bound to serve beyond the British isles; and two hundred and ninety thousand volunteers, of whom twenty-five thousand were cavalry, in a very considerable state of efficiency. Great part of this immense force, without doubt, was absorbed in the defence of the

numerous and extensive colonies which formed part of the English dominions. But the official returns proved that a hundred thousand men, including twenty thousand cavalry, were disposable in the British isles: and in a minute made out by the Duke of York, it was proved, that "in 1808, sixty thousand men could have been provided for the campaign in Spain without detriment to any other service." Of this force it is not going too far to say that it was all in the highest state of discipline and equipment; and that not only was it equal for a pitched battle to any body of men of similar amount which could be brought against it, but, if all assembled, was adequate to the encounter of the largest army ever yet collected in a single field under the standards of Napoleon.^{1*}

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¹ Parl. Returns, July 1807. Parl. Deb. ix. 3d App. and Napier, i. 81. App. and Foy, i. 210.

But it was not so much from underrating the numerical strength, as from mistaking the spirit which animated the British army, and the degree of interest which its exploits excited in the country, that the French government was led to regard too lightly the chances of success which it possessed in a Continental struggle. With all his information and sagacity, Napoleon here fell into the common error of judging of the present by the past. The English soldiers had achieved so little during the war, that it was generally supposed they were incapable of doing anything: their navy had done so much, that it

22.
Spirit with which it was animated and regarded by the people.

* The numbers, in July 1808, were:—

Regulars.		Militia.	Volunteers.	
Infantry,	156,561		Infantry,	254,544
Cavalry,	26,315	77,990	Cavalry,	25,342
			Artillery,	9,420
	182,876			289,306
In all,	Regulars,	182,867		
	Militia,	77,990		
	Volunteers,	289,306		
	In arms,	550,163		

Of this force of regulars, 81,000 infantry and 20,000 cavalry were at home in the British isles, and of course disposable. In the muster-rolls of the English army, sabres and bayonets are alone estimated, which is not the case in the French and Continental services: a peculiarity which made the real strength of the English regular army about 200,000 men.—*Parl. Deb.* ix. iii. *App.*

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was taken for granted it could do anything, and that the whole interest and pride of the nation were centred on its triumphs. In the interim, however, the general arming of the people, the excitement produced by the threats of invasion, the profound interest kept alive by the Continental war, the triumphs of Alexandria and Maida, had awakened a most extraordinary degree of military ardour, and diffused no inconsiderable amount of military information, throughout the people. The warlike establishments which pervaded the country were admirably calculated to foster this growing enthusiasm, and turn it to the best account in augmenting the numbers and increasing the spirit of the regular army. The militia served as an invaluable nursery for the line; the volunteers, changed soon after into local militia, corresponding very nearly to the German landwehr, provided a never-failing supply of recruits, tolerably instructed in the rudiments of discipline, for the militia. Numbers of young men of all ranks, caught by the animation, the idleness, or the dress of soldiers, embraced the military profession: thenceforward to the end of the war there was no difficulty whatever experienced in finding adequate supplies of recruits for the army, and filling up all the fearful chasms which war and disease made in its ranks. Thus, while the French were deluded with the idea that the English were altogether contemptible by land, they had already made great progress in the formation of a powerful army; and while their enemies were talking about sea-wolves and maritime skill, the spirit was engendered destined to produce the triumphs of Vitoria and Waterloo.¹

¹ Foy, i. 210, 212, 220, 221. Hard. x. 158, 159.

23.

Character
and quali-
ties of the
British
soldiers.

The vast ameliorations effected by the Duke of York in the discipline and organisation of the army, and the improved military education which the younger officers had now for some years received, had at the same period afforded increased advantages for the successful display of that physical strength, and that undaunted moral resolution, which in every age have formed the great characteristics of

the British soldiers. The latter invaluable quality gave them a very great advantage: it is the true basis of a powerful army. Skill, experience, discipline, can be superadded by practice, or acquired by exercise; but if this one moral quality be wanting, all such acquisitions will prove of little avail. How inferior soever to their antagonists in experience, or that dexterity in the varied duties of a campaign which actual service alone can give, the English soldiers, from the very first, had the animating conviction that they were their equals, possibly their superiors, in actual combat; and that all the advantages of their veteran opponents would be at an end if once they engaged in a regular battle. And so it proved even from the outset; and it is inconceivable how soon this one quality of *dogged resolution in the field* came to neutralise all the superiority of acquired skill and veteran discipline. The military is essentially a practical art; its wants and necessities are soon brought home by actual experience and suffering to an army in the field. But no amount of experience or discipline can supply the want of individual courage; with it, all the rest is easily acquired. If it possesses the resolution to fight, and the discipline to obey, a very short time will supply the rest. There is no education so rapid and effectual as that which takes place in the presence of an enemy.

Of various natural and acquired excellence, it is hard to say whether, in the Peninsular war, the British or French soldiers, after a few years, were the most admirable. In the service of light troops; in undergoing with cheerfulness the fatigues of a campaign; in dexterity at making themselves comfortable under privation; in rapidity of firing, care of their horses by the cavalry, and enthusiastic gallantry at the first onset, the French troops for a long period had the advantage; and this, joined to their almost invariable superiority of numbers, had ordinarily turned the general issue of the campaign in their favour. But when the hostile lines actually met, and the

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24.
Parallel between the
British and
French
troops.

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national resolution was fairly put to the test, the British soldiers from the very beginning successfully asserted their superiority. It is a most extraordinary fact, but one which this history will abundantly demonstrate, that in every battle between the English and the French, from the beginning to the end of the Peninsular war, without exception, the former were victorious, although they were for the most part inexperienced at first in actual warfare, and their opponents had been trained in fifteen years of conflict and victory. Splendid in appearance, overflowing with courage, irresistible in a single charge, the British cavalry could hardly be said to be equal—at least for general service, or the protracted fatigues of a campaign—to that of Napoleon: a remarkable circumstance, when the great attention bestowed on horses in England is taken into consideration. But their artillery, superior to any in the world in the admirable equipment of the guns and ammunition train, was second to none in the coolness and practice of the gunners; and in the steadiness and precision of their fire, the constancy which they displayed under danger, their calmness in anger, and the terrible vehemence of their charge with the bayonet, the British infantry were beyond all question the first in Europe.¹*

¹ Foy, i.
226, 227.

25.
Important
effect of the
British
officers be-
ing exclu-
sively taken
from the
higher
ranks,

In one important particular, the English army was formed upon an entirely different principle from the French. In the latter, the officers constituted in no degree a separate class from the soldiers; the equality, which was the object of universal desire at the outset of the Revolution, and the conscription, which reached indiscriminately all ranks in its later stages, alike forbade any such line of demarcation. Thus, not only had all the marshals and generals in the service originally entered on the military career in the ranks, but to such as survived the rapid consumption of life in the imperial wars, pro-

* "Le soldat Anglais," says General Foy, "possède la qualité la plus précieuse dans la guerre, *le calme dans la colère*."—Foy, i. 227.

motion was still certain from the humblest station to the highest grades in the army. In the former, again, a line, in practice almost impassable, separated the private soldier from the officer ; they were drawn from different classes in society, accustomed to different habits, instructed by a different education, actuated by different desires. To the French conscript, glory, promotion, the prospect of ultimate greatness, were the chief stimulants to exertion ; in the English army, though the influence of such desires was strongly felt by the officers, yet the efforts of the common men were principally excited by a different set of motives. A sense of military duty, the wish to win the respect of their comrades, an instinctive principle of courage, an anxious desire to uphold the renown of their regiment, a firm determination to defend the cause of Old England, and an undoubting faith in the superiority of its arms, constituted the real springs of military exertion.

The great majority of the English soldiers felt no desire to be made officers. To become sergeants and corporals was, indeed, a very general and deserved object of ambition to the meritorious privates, because that elevated them in, without taking them out of, their own sphere in life ; but they felt that they would be uncomfortable in the daily society of the commissioned officers, their superiors in birth, habits, and acquirements. And though many, in the course of the war, from the force of extraordinary merit, broke through these restraints, and some discharged in the most exemplary manner the duties of the most elevated ranks, who had originally borne a musket on their shoulders, yet in general the situation of privates who had risen to the officers' mess was not so comfortable as to render the change an object of general desire.¹

It may appear paradoxical to assert, but it is nevertheless strictly true, that this feeling of the propriety of each class striving to become respectable in itself, without

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26.
The English soldiers were contented with their lot.

¹ Duke of Wellington's Evid. on Military Punishment. Parl. Pro. June 1836.

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27.

Which arose
from the
self-respect
of all classes.

seeking to overstep its limits, is the natural effect of long-established freedom and order; and is much more nearly allied to the genuine spirit of liberty than the feverish desire of individual elevation, which, throughout all its phases, was the mainspring of the French Revolution. Where each class is respectable and protected in itself, it feels its own importance, and often disdains to seek admission into that next in succession. The universal passion for individual exaltation is the offspring of a state of society where the rights and immunities of the humbler ranks have been habitually, by all persons in power, trampled under foot. The clearest proof of this is to be found in daily experience. The men who throughout so many ages have maintained the liberties of England, are not those who were striving perpetually to elevate themselves by a sudden start above their neighbours, but those who, by a life of unobtrusive honest industry, have risen to comfort or opulence in their own sphere, without any desire to leave it. And the strength of the state at present is not to be found in the anxious aspirants after aristocratic favour, or the giddy candidates for fashionable distinction, but in the unheeded efforts of that more numerous but unobserved class, which is too proud of its own rank to aspire to any above it.¹

¹ Foy, i.
226, 227.

28.

Severe discipline.
Corporal punishments which
still subsisted.

An iron discipline had given the military force, thus constituted, a degree of firmness and regularity unknown to any other service in Europe. The use of the lash—that terrible remnant of savage rule—was still painfully frequent; and instances were not uncommon of soldiers, for inconsiderable offences, receiving five hundred, eight hundred, and even one thousand stripes—an amount of torture equal perhaps to any ever inflicted by the Inquisition. But though the friends of humanity beheld with horror this barbarous infliction, so foreign to the spirit of the English constitution, and one disused in the French and several other Continental armies, yet the experienced

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observers, who considered the character of the class from which the English recruits were almost exclusively drawn, and the impossibility of giving them the prospect of promotion which operated so strongly on French conscripts, still hesitated as to the practicability of abolishing this painful and terrible correction, though they strenuously contended for the limitation of its frightful barbarity. They regarded its disgrace as the price paid by the nation for the democratic economy, which denied to the soldiers such a pay as would secure for the ranks of its army a class with whom such inflictions might be unnecessary, or render expulsion from these ranks a sufficient object of dread; and that constitution which, by confining commissions in the military service to men of family and property, possessed of a permanent interest in the commonwealth, had obtained the best possible security against its force being applied to the destruction of the public liberties.¹

¹ Duke of Wellington,
ut supra.

Better fed, clothed, lodged, and paid than any other in Europe, the English soldier had an attention devoted to his wants, both in health and sickness, and experienced an integrity in the administration of every department of the army, which could be attained only in a country where habits of freedom have long coexisted with those of order, and experience had pointed out the mode of effectually checking the abuses which invariably have a tendency to grow up in every branch of the public administration. Pensions, varying according to the period or the amount of service, secured for the veteran, the maimed, or the wounded, an adequate maintenance for the remainder of life. True, he fought—in the language of Colonel Napier—in the cold shade of aristocracy; true, he could not boast that the rays of imperial favour would be attracted by the helmet of the cuirassier, or the bayonet of the grenadier; but he was sure, from good conduct, of obtaining that respect in his own sphere, and those substantial advantages, which were adapted to

29.
Physical
comforts of
the British
soldiers.

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his situation and his wishes. Experience has abundantly proved that the concentration of government support on those whose only title to power is military distinction, is a sure prelude to unbridled administration ; and that, if the soldier no longer fought in the cold shade of aristocracy, the citizen would pine in the hopeless frost of military despotism.*

Nor was the inequality of force with which this great struggle was to be conducted so great in its progress as

General Foy's graphic contrast of the English and French soldiers and officers.

* General Foy has left a graphic picture of the different habits of the English and French soldiers during a campaign in the Peninsular war, of the truth of which every one must, to a certain degree, be convinced. "Behold," says he, "the French battalions, when they arrive at their bivouacs after a long and painful march. No sooner have the drums ceased to beat, than the havresacks of the soldiers, disposed round the piles of arms, mark out the ground where they are to pass the night. They put off their coats : clothed only in their great-coats, they run to collect provisions, water, and straw. The fires are lighted ; the soup is soon prepared ; trees brought from the adjoining wood are rudely carved into supports or beams for the huts. Quickly the simple barracks are raised ; the air resounds with the sounds of the hatchet ; while the soup is preparing, the young men, impatient of their idleness, clean their arms, arrange their knapsacks, clean their gaiters. The soup is soon ready ; if wine is wanting, the conversation soon flags, and the noisy multitude is speedily buried in sleep. If, on the other hand, the generous fluid circulates, joyous looks follow the barrels as they are brought on men's backs into the centres of the rings ; the veterans recount to the young conscripts the battles in which their regiment has acquired so much renown, and the universal transport when the Emperor, mounted on his white charger and followed by his Mameluke, suddenly appeared among them.

"Turn now to the English camp. You see the soldiers exhausted and motionless, reclining on the ground : are they waiting like the Spahis in the Turkish camp till the slaves prepare their victuals ? No ! they have made at leisure a very moderate march, and have reached at two in the afternoon the ground they are to occupy for the night. Bread and meat are brought ; the sergeant makes the distribution ; he tells them where they will find water and straw, and where the trees which are to be felled will be found. When the logs arrive, he shows where each is to be placed ; he reprimands the unskilful, and stimulates the lazy. Where is the industrious enterprising spirit of that nation which has outstripped all others in vigour and intelligence ? Out of their own routine the soldiers can do nothing : if once the restraints of discipline are broken, excesses of every kind are indulged in, and intemperance prevails to a degree which would astonish the Cossacks themselves. Nevertheless, do not hazard an attack unless you are well assured of success : the English soldier is not brave at times merely ; he is so whenever he has eat well, drunk well, and slept well. Yet their courage, rather instinctive than acquired, has need of solid nutriment ; and no thoughts of glory will ever make them forget that they are hungry, or that their shoes are worn out.¹

"Nor is the difference less remarkable in the superior officers. While a French general of division is occupied during the leisure moments of a cam-

¹ Foy, i. 231, 233.

it appeared in the outset. Napoleon, indeed, commenced the contest with a hundred and fifteen thousand infantry, and sixteen thousand horse, in the Peninsula,* and the possession of all the most important strongholds which it contained; and the French force permanently maintained over its surface, after the British troops landed, exceeded two hundred and fifty, and rose at times as high as three hundred and fifty thousand men; while there never were so many as fifty thousand British soldiers in the Penin-

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30.

Difficulty
of keeping
any consi-
derable force
together in
the interior
of the Pen-
insula.

paign in studying the topography of the country, or the disposition of its inhabitants; in attending to the nourishment, drilling, or haranguing of his troops; in endeavouring to persuade the Spanish people to adopt the system of administration, or yield to the political conduct of his country—the English general opposed to him spends his time between the chase, riding on horseback, and the pleasures of the table. The first, alternately governor, engineer, commissary, has his mind continually on the stretch; his daily occupations lead to an enlargement of his intellect, and a continual extension of his sphere of activity. The other, as indifferent to the localities of the country in which he makes war, as to the language, disposition, or prejudices of its inhabitants, applies to the commissary to supply provisions; to the quarter-master-general for information concerning the country in which he has to act, and the marches he has to perform; to the adjutant-general for any other supplies of which he may stand in need. Unless when employed in a separate command, he seeks to narrow the sphere of his exertions and responsibility. He leads on his troops in battle with the most admirable courage; but in cantonments his habitual exertions are limited to superintending the police of his troops, seeing that their exercises are daily performed, and transmitting reports to his superiors.¹ Notwithstanding his admirable general candour, the French general appears, in this graphic description, to have been somewhat influenced by the prejudices of his country, though the outline of the sketch is undoubtedly correct. But the military is essentially a practical art; and notwithstanding all their riding and hunting, experience soon made the English generals as expert at all the really useful parts of their profession as the more inquisitive and instructed Frenchmen; and they are not the worst soldiers who, without disquieting themselves with the duties or designs of their superiors, are at all times ready with undaunted courage to carry them into effect.

* Viz, In Spain—

	INFANTRY.	CAVALRY.
Dupont's corps,	24,428	4,056
Moncey's do.	29,341	3,860
Bessières' do.	19,096	1,881
Duhesme's do.	12,724	2,033
Imperial Guard,	6,412	3,300
In Portugal—		
Junot's corps,	24,978	1771
	116,979	16,901

Besides 44,374 infantry, and 4,685 cavalry, who arrived on the Ebro by the 1st August 1808.—Foy, iv. *Table 1, Appendix.*

¹ Foy, i.
231, 257.

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1 Nap. i. 47.
Foy, i. 203,
204.31.
Fortunate
position of
the British
troops.

sula. Indeed, the actual force under the standards of Wellington seldom exceeded thirty, and was generally for the first three years not above twenty-five thousand English sabres and bayonets. Still this force formed the nucleus of an army which, with the addition of the Portuguese levies of equal amount, disciplined and led by British officers, soon became extremely formidable; and from the position which it occupied, backed by the sea, the true base of British military operations, and on the flank of the French armies dispersed through the Peninsula, became more than a match for double the amount of the enemy.¹

Its fortunate central position in Portugal, resting on what became, under the tutelary genius of Wellington, an impregnable intrenched position in front of Lisbon, afforded to a commander of talent a favourable opportunity of striking serious blows at the enemy before their dispersed forces could collect from different quarters. If they did so, the insurrection burst forth again in the provinces they had evacuated; if they remained long together, famine, in an inland country so largely intersected by arid plains or desert ridges, soon paralysed any considerable offensive operations. The truth of the old saying of Henry IV., "If you make war in Spain with a small army, you are beaten—if with a large one, starved," was never more strongly evinced than in the Peninsular campaigns. Though Wellington frequently experienced this difficulty in the severest manner, when he advanced into the interior of the country, yet his army, in the general case, from its vicinity to the sea-coast of Portugal, or the water-carriage of its principal rivers, was in comparison abundantly supplied with provisions; and though he was in general inferior in number to the enemy, sometimes to a very great degree, when he hazarded a battle,² yet the discrepancy in this respect was never so great as the extraordinary difference in the sum-total of the regular forces which

2 Napier, i.
47. Foy, i.
204.

the two nations had in the field might have led us to expect.

The military establishment of Spain, when the contest commenced at the signal of the French cannon in the streets of Madrid on the 2d May, was by no means considerable. It consisted, in 1807, of eighty thousand troops of the line, besides sixteen thousand cavalry and thirty thousand militia; but the ranks were far from being complete, and the total effective force, including the militia, was under a hundred thousand men. From this number were to be deducted sixteen thousand under Romana in Holstein, six thousand in Tuscany, or on the march thence to the north of Germany, and the garrisons of the Canary and Balcaric Isles. Thus the troops that could be brought into the field did not at the utmost exceed seventy thousand, of whom twenty thousand were already partially concentrated in the Alentejo and Oporto, and the only considerable body of the remainder, about ten thousand strong, was in the lines of St Roque, at Gibraltar. The composition of this force was still less formidable than its numerical amount. Enervated by a long Continental peace, the soldiers had lost much of the spirit and discipline of war; the men, enrolled for the most part by voluntary enlistment, and only in case of necessity, and in some of the provinces, by conscription, were sober, active, and brave. But the officers were, in most instances, extremely deficient, both in the knowledge and proper feelings of their profession; and the proportion which they bore to the common men, as in the French army previous to the Revolution, was altogether excessive. The common men were ill fed and clothed, and habitually cheated by their officers in their food and equipment. The navy was in a still worse condition: it was reduced to thirty-three ships of the line and six frigates, of which only *six* were equipped and fit for service.¹

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32.

Military
force of
Spain at
the com-
mencement
of the con-
test.

¹ Foy, ii.
216, 219.
Nap. i. 46.
Jom. ii. 51.
Thiers, viii.
270, 273.

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LIII.1808.
33.Character
and habits
of the offi-
cers.

Like the land forces, the navy was devoured by a host of supernumerary and useless officers, who did nothing but consume the funds which should have gone to the sailors' support. They were, indeed, for the most part, men of family—a certain proof of descent being necessary to obtaining commissions in two-thirds of the military offices at the disposal of government. But the restriction afforded no security either for extended information or generous sentiments in a country where four hundred thousand hidalgos, too proud to work, too indolent to learn, loitered away an inglorious life, basking in the sun, or lounging in the billiard-rooms or coffeehouses of the great towns. From this ignorant and conceited class the great bulk of the officers of all ranks were taken; not more than three or four of the high nobility held situations in the army when the war broke out. Leading an indolent life in towns, sleeping half the day in uncomfortable barracks, associating indiscriminately with the common soldiers, many of whom were superior in birth and intelligence to themselves, and knowing no enjoyments but idleness, gallantry, and billiards, they were as deficient in the energy and vigour which the Revolution had developed in the French, as in the sentiments of honour and integrity which the habits of a monarchy tempered by freedom had nursed in the English army. It was easy to foresee that no reliance could be placed, in a protracted struggle, on this debilitated force. Yet such is the importance of discipline and military organisation, even in their most defective form, in warlike operations, that the only great success achieved in the field by the Spaniards during the whole war was owing to its exertions.¹

¹ Foy, ii.
216, 221.
Nap. i. 46.
Jom. ii. 52.

34.
Military
force and
physical
character of
Portugal.

Though Portugal had a surface of only 5035 square geographical leagues, or 40,000 square geographical miles, being not quite half of the British islands, and a population of somewhat above three millions, instead of the twelve millions which were contained in Spain, yet it pos-

sessed in itself the elements of a more efficient military force than its powerful neighbour. The invaluable institution of *ordenanzas*, or local militia, had survived the usurpation of Spain; and during twenty-seven campaigns which followed the restoration of the independence of the country in 1640, it had rendered more important services to the state than the regular army. By the Portuguese law, every person, from the age of eighteen to that of sixty years, is legally obliged to join the battalions arrayed in defence of the country. These battalions consist of two hundred and fifty men each, under the command of the chief landed proprietors of the district; and such is the native strength of a country so defended, that, with a very little aid from England, it had enabled the Portuguese for two centuries to maintain their independence. The physical peculiarities of the country rendered it singularly well adapted for the active operations of an irregular force of this description. Intersected in many directions, but especially to the north of the Tagus, by lofty sierras, terminating in sharp inaccessible cliffs, which rise, even in that favoured latitude, almost into the region of eternal snow; destitute for the most part of roads, and such as do exist perpetually crossing rivers without bridges, or ravines affording the most favourable positions for a defensive army; covered with Moorish towers or castles perched on the summits of rocks, or villages in general surrounded by defensive walls; inhabited by a bold, active, and independent peasantry, long habituated to the use of arms, and backed by impregnable mountain ridges washed by the sea, Portugal presented the most advantageous fulcrum which Europe could afford whereon to rest the military efforts of England.¹

But these advantages were all dependent on the physical situation and natural character of the inhabitants, or the consequences of the former and more glorious epochs of their history. At the period when the Peninsular war broke out, no country could be in a more debilitated

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1808.

¹ Malte-
Brun, vii.
487. Nap.
i. 26, 27.
Foy, ii.
1-80.

35.
General
corruption
and abuses
in the mili-
tary estab-
lishment.

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LIII.

1803.

state, as far as either political vigour or military efficiency is concerned. Corruption pervaded every department of the public service, to such an extent as to be apparently irremediable. The army, ill-fed, worse paid, and overrun, like that of Spain, by a swarm of titled locusts who devoured the pay of the soldier and did nothing, was both an unpopular and inefficient service. Forty thousand men, including eight thousand cavalry, of whom the troops of the line nominally consisted, might have furnished an excellent base whereon, with the addition of the militia and ordenanzas, to construct a powerful military establishment. But such were the abuses with which the service was infested, and the ignorance of the officers in command, that hardly any reliance could be placed on its operations; and it was not till they were recast in the mould of British integrity, and led by the intrepidity of British officers, that the Portuguese arms reappeared with their ancient lustre on the theatre of Europe.¹

¹ Foy, ii. 1,
83. Napier,
i. 27.

35.
Amount,
quality, and
disposition
of the French
army at this
period in
Spain.

In the disposition of his force when the contest commenced, Napoleon had principally in view to overawe and secure the metropolis, conceiving that Madrid was like Paris or Vienna, and that there was little chance of the country holding out for any length of time against the power in command of the capital. The Imperial Guards, with the corps of Moncey and Dupont, were assembled in that city or its immediate neighbourhood; and as this concentration of above fifty thousand men in the heart of the kingdom exposed the communication with the Pyrenees to danger, the Emperor was indefatigable in his endeavours to form a powerful corps of reserve at Burgos and Vitoria, under Marshal Bessières. With such success were his efforts attended, that by the beginning of June this able officer had twenty-three thousand men under his standards. At the same period the troops under Duhesme, in the fortresses of Barcelona and Figueras in Catalonia, numbered above fifteen thousand men, sufficient, it was hoped, to overawe the discontented in that province.

Thus, after making every allowance for the detachments necessary to maintain the capital and frontier fortresses, and keep up the communications, fifty thousand men, with eighty guns, were ready in the north and centre of Spain to commence offensive operations—a force amply sufficient, if concentrated, to crush any attempt at resistance which could have been made in the Peninsula. But the composition of these troops was very unequal; and though the Imperial Guard and some of the veteran divisions in the capital were in the finest state of discipline and efficiency, yet this was by no means the case with the whole army. All, indeed, partook of the admirable organisation of the French service, yet the ranks were for the most part filled up with raw conscripts, hardly yet instructed in the rudiments of the military art. Had it not been for the excellence of the skeletons on which they were formed, and the officers by whom they were directed, the difference between them and the insurgent peasantry would not have been very considerable. They were very different from the soldiers of Austerlitz, Jena, or Friedland: the enormous consumption of life in those bloody campaigns had almost destroyed the incomparable army which, disciplined on the heights of Boulogne, had so long chained victory to the imperial eagles; and what remained of it was still on the Oder or the Vistula, to retain the Emperor's supremacy in the north of Europe.¹

Such was the situation of the French army when the insurrection at once broke out in every part of the Peninsula. It burst forth with such force and unanimity in all the provinces, that it could not have been more simultaneous if an electric shock had at once struck the whole population. With the intelligence of the commotion and massacre at Madrid, a convulsive thrill ran through every fibre of Spain. The sense of their wrongs, the humiliation of their situation, the thirst for vengeance, broke at once upon the people, and one universal cry to arms was heard from one end of the kingdom to the other. Every-

¹ Napoleon's Notes, Ap. No. 3. Napier, vol. i. Thiébault, 64, 72. Napier, i. 47. Duhesme's Guerre en Catalogne, 17, 21.

37.
Progress and early forces of the insurrection.

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1808.

where the peasantry met together in tumultuous crowds. From town to town, from village to village, from hamlet to hamlet, the news flew with incredible rapidity; and as the French troops, though in possession of the capital and frontier fortresses, were by no means scattered over the country, the proceedings of the insurgents hardly anywhere met with molestation. The excitement was universal: the young and the old, the feeble and the strong, the shepherds of the mountains and the cultivators of the plains, the citizens of the towns and the peasantry of the country, all shared in the general transport. Arms were quickly sent for and obtained from the nearest depots in the district; officers and colonels of battalions elected; provisional juntas of government formed in the chief towns, to direct the affairs of the provinces; and, in the absence of all central authority, local governments soon sprang up in every part of the kingdom. Spain awoke from the slumber of centuries, and started at once to her feet with the vigour and resolution of an armed man. Passing over in disdain the degradation or insignificance of the Bourbon dynasty, the people came forth fresh for the combat, glowing with the recollections of the Cid and Pelajo, and the long struggle with the Moors, and the heroic days of the monarchy.¹

¹ Tor. i.
173, 178.
Duhesme,
10-12. Foy,
iv. 52. Lond.
i. 80.

38.
Vigorous
efforts at first
made for
carrying on
the contest.

Nor was this extraordinary and unanimous burst of feeling lost in mere empty ebullition. Resolving, with a facility peculiar to themselves, into the pristine elements of the monarchy, the different provinces, with unparalleled rapidity, formed separate and independent juntas of government, which early gave a systematic direction to their efforts, and effected the formation of numerous and enthusiastic legions for their defence. It was easy to foresee how prejudicial to any combined or efficient general operations this unavoidable partition of the directing power into so many separate and independent assemblies must in the end necessarily prove. But, in the first instance, it tended strongly to promote the pro-

gress of the insurrection, by establishing in every province a centre of insulated, detached, and often ill-advised, but still vigorous operations. Before the middle of June, numerous bodies were raised, armed, and to a certain degree disciplined in all the provinces; and a hundred and fifty thousand men were ready to support the regular army. Even the presence of the French garrisons in the capital and the frontier fortresses could not repress the general effervescence. Almost all the regular soldiers in Madrid escaped, and joined the insurgent bands of New Castile; under the very guns of their strong castles of Montjuich and St Juan de Fernando, alarming symptoms of disaffection appeared in Barcelona and Figueras, and their Spanish garrisons almost all made their escape to the enemy. Spain proved true to her old character; the lapse of eighteen hundred years had made no alteration on the disposition of her inhabitants.¹

In the northern provinces, especially Catalonia, Asturias, Leon, and Galicia, the insurrection took place, and the provincial juntas were established, in a comparatively regular manner, without any of the usual frightful ebullitions of popular passion. But it was far otherwise in the cities of the south and east of Spain. The usual vehemence and intemperance of the unbridled populace of great towns, was there increased by the fiery intermixture of Moorish blood. Frightful atrocities were committed. At Badajoz, the governor, who endeavoured to restrain the furious multitude which surrounded his house clamouring for arms, was dragged out and murdered; numbers were massacred, on the supposition of being agents or partisans of the French, at Carthagena, Granada, Carolina, Cadiz, and other places; and at Cadiz a fearful altercation took place between the governor, Solano, who refused to commence the hostilities which were required of him against the French squadron of five ships of the line, which had lain in the harbour since the battle of Trafalgar, and the ardent populace,

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¹ Tor. i.
173, 175.
South. i.
335, 337.
Duhesme,
11, 12.
Foy, iv.
32, 33.
Lond. i.
80, 81.
Napier,
i. 52.

39.
Frightful
disorders
which sig-
nalled the
commence-
ment of the
insurrection
in some
cities.

May 26.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

May 29.

¹ South. i.
341, 356.
Nell. i. 134,
143. Tor.
i. 209, 214.
Foy, i. 201.
208.

40.
Massacres
with which
the revo-
lution in
Valencia
commenced.
May 24.

who clamoured for an immediate attack. Independent of a secret leaning to the French interest, he naturally hesitated, as an officer of prudence and honour, at taking the decisive step of attacking, without any previous declaration of war or authority from the executive power, a squadron of an allied state which had taken refuge in Cadiz during the hostilities with Great Britain; and he openly expressed an apprehension that, during these dissensions, the English would break in and destroy the fleets of both contending parties. Finding that the popular effervescence was becoming too strong to be openly resisted, he endeavoured to temporise, called a council of war, and gave symptoms of submission to the public wish. But the populace, distrusting his sincerity, broke into his hotel, and chased him into the house of Mr Strange, an English merchant, where he was discovered by a set of bloodthirsty assassins, who dragged him from his place of concealment, notwithstanding the courageous efforts of Mrs Strange to save his life, and massacred him while on the road towards the gallows. He met his fate with dignity and composure, bidding his heroic supporter, Mrs Strange, farewell till eternity. Don Thomas Morla, the second in command, was next day nominated to the government of Cadiz by popular acclamation, and immediately entered on the duties of his important office.¹

At Valencia the first burst of popular indignation was accompanied by still more frightful atrocities. Three hundred French merchants or traders had long been established in that city, and when the insurrection broke out there in the end of May, they all, as a measure of precaution, took refuge in, or were sent to the citadel, where they were supposed to be safe from any violence that might arise. An ardent, resolute, and able Franciscan monk, Juan Rico, early acquired, by his powers of public speaking, the lead in the movement; but the junta elected for the government was composed, as in most other instances, of a mixture of persons of patrician and

plebeian origin. The people, however, from the first conceived a jealousy of the nobles; and to such a height did that feeling arrive, that the commander of the troops, Don Fernando Saavedra, was massacred before the eyes of the Count de Cervellon, a nobleman of the popular side, to whose palace he had fled for safety. This deed of blood was but the prelude to still greater atrocities; and the popular appetite for slaughter being once aroused, the multitude fell, as usual in such circumstances, under the direction of the most worthless and sanguinary leaders. In Valencia there appeared at this period one of those infamous characters who degrade the human race by their cruel deeds, and who is worthy of a place in history beside Robespierre, Collot d'Herbois, and the other political fanatics whose atrocities have for ever stained the annals of the French Revolution. Padre Balthasar Calvo, a canon of Madrid, denounced the fugitives in the citadel to the mob, as being in correspondence with Murat for the purpose of betraying that stronghold to the French troops. As invariably ensues in such moments of excitement, strong assertions passed for proofs with the multitude, and no difficulty was experienced in finding persons to undertake the most sanguinary designs. A general massacre of the unfortunate French was resolved on, and its execution fixed for the 5th June.¹

Mingling perfidy with cruelty, Calvo, on the evening of that day, repaired to the citadel, and told the trembling inmates, who already had conceived, from vague rumours, apprehensions of their fate, that their destruction was resolved on, and that their only remaining chance of safety was to avail themselves of the means of escape which, from an impulse of Christian charity, he had prepared for them. Trusting to these perfidious assurances, the unhappy victims agreed to his proposal, and two hundred of them set forth by the wicket through the walls, which, according to his promise, was left open for them. No sooner had this flight begun,

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1808.

May 29.

June 1.
1 Tor. i.
236, 240.
Foy, iii.
244, 246.
South. i.
363, 369.41.
Atrocious
cruelty of
Calvo and
the insur-
gents.

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LIII.

1808.

than Calvo, with a band of assassins, hastened to the spot, and, spreading the cry that the French were escaping, so worked upon the passions of the populace assembled as to induce them to join his murderers, and they were all massacred without mercy. Wearied with slaughter, and yielding to the solicitations of some benevolent ecclesiastics, who earnestly besought them to desist, the assassins at length agreed to spare those who still survived in the citadel; but no sooner did Calvo hear of this returning feeling of humanity than he hastened to the spot, and conducted the remaining prisoners outside the walls to a ruined tower called the Tour de Cuarte. There he spread a false report that papers had been found upon them, proving a design to deliver up the citadel to the French; and the mob, again infuriated, fell upon their victims, and despatched them to a man.¹

¹ South. i.
363, 366.
Tor. i. 238,
240. Foy,
iii. 244, 246.

42.
Deserved
punishment
of Calvo and
his asso-
ciates.

Above three hundred French citizens, wholly innocent of the misdeeds of their Emperor, perished on that dreadful night. The junta were overawed; the magistrates of the city, elected by popular suffrage, proved powerless, as might have been expected, in repressing these excesses. Calvo, unopposed, drunk with blood, not only despatched his orders from the citadel during the whole massacre like a sovereign prince, but in the morning was named a member of the junta, at the very moment that Rico was concerting measures for his apprehension, and took his seat, with his clothes yet drenched with gore, at the council-board of government! It affords some consolation to the friends of virtue to know, that the triumph of this miscreant was not of long duration. Excited almost to insanity by his execrable success, he openly aspired to supreme power, and had already given orders for the apprehension of the other members of the government, when a sense of their common danger made them unite, like the Convention on the 9th Thermidor, against the tyrant. He was suddenly arrested and sent to Minorca, before the mob, who certainly would have

rescued him and massacred the junta, were aware of his seizure. There he was strangled in prison, and the government having regained their authority by this vigorous act, two hundred of his associates underwent the same fate. A severe but necessary deed of public justice, which at least rescued the nation generally from the disgrace of these atrocious deeds, and one indicating a very different standard of public morality from that which prevailed in France during its Revolution, where not only were such crimes almost invariably committed with impunity, but their perpetrators were elevated to the highest situations in the state.^{1*}

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LIII.
1803.

These deplorable disorders sufficiently demonstrated that the best of causes cannot obviate the dangers of popular insurrection, and that, unless the higher orders and holders of property early and courageously exert themselves to obtain its direction, a revolutionary movement, even when called forth by the noblest motives and in the national defence, speedily falls under the guidance of the most depraved of the people. But by adopting this prudent and patriotic course, the higher classes at Seville succeeded not only in preserving their own city from servile atrocities, but acquired an ascendancy which was attended with the greatest public benefit, and gave their junta almost the general management of the affairs of Spain. There, as elsewhere in the south, the public

43.
Prudent
measures
adopted by
the nobles
at Seville.
Proceedings
of its junta.

* Only one prisoner escaped this hideous massacre. Chance had selected for his murderer a man whom he had frequently relieved in prison; the wretch recognised his benefactor, and though he twice raised his dagger to strike him, yet twice a sense of pity arrested his uplifted arm, and at length he suffered him to escape in the obscurity of the night among the populace. An extraordinary instance of presence of mind occurred in the daughter of the Count de Cervellon. The people, distrustful of their leaders, had insisted that the mail from Madrid should be brought to the Count, and the letters it contained publicly read; hardly was it opened when one from the *Auerdo Real* was discovered, to Murat, exculpating himself from the share he had taken in the insurrection, and demanding troops. The courageous young lady, who was present, instantly seized the letter, and tore it in pieces in presence of the multitude, saying it related to her own private affairs; thereby saving the whole members of the junta from immediate death, though at the imminent hazard of her own life.—See SOUTHEY, i. 367; and TORENO, i. 234, 235.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

May 26.

May 27.

effervescence began with murder, and the Count d'Aguilar, one of the chief magistrates and most enlightened citizens, who became the innocent object of their suspicion, fell a victim to the ungovernable passions of the populace, who, when too late, lamented the irreparable crime they had committed. Speedily, however, the junta was elected; and happily, though all ranks were represented, a preponderance of votes, out of the twenty-three members of which it was composed, was in the hands of the nobility. The wisdom of the choice which had been made soon appeared in the measures which were adopted. Immediately they despatched couriers to Cadiz and Algesiras, to secure the assistance of the naval and military forces which were there assembled; and by the aid of CASTANOS, the commander of the latter, who was at the head of the troops before Gibraltar in the camp of St Roque, and who had already entered into communication with Sir Hugh Dalrymple, the governor of that fortress, the entire co-operation of the army was secured.¹

¹ Tor. i. 204,
206. Foy,
iii. 201, 292.
Espanol. i.
13.

44.
Fortunate
overthrow
of the ex-
treme de-
mocrats.

A violent demagogue, named Tap-y-Nunez, who had acquired a great sway over the populace, and who required that the nobility should be expelled from the junta, was arrested and sent to Cadiz; and this necessary act of vigour confirmed the authority of the provisional government. At its head was Don Francisco Saavedra, who had formerly been minister of finance, and P. Gil de Sevilla, who had both been sufferers under Godoy's administration; and the combined prudence and energy of their measures formed a striking contrast to the conceit, declamation, and imbecility which, in many other quarters of the Peninsula, afterwards rendered nugatory all the enthusiasm of the people. The regular troops were immediately directed towards the Sierra Morena to secure the passes; a general levy of all persons between the years of eighteen and forty-five was ordered; subsidiary juntas were formed in all the towns of Andalusia; the great foundery of cannon at Seville, the only one in

the south of Spain, was put into full activity, and arms and clothing were manufactured. War was soon after declared in a formal manner against France, and a manifesto issued, which not only eloquently defended the national cause, but contained the most admirable instructions as to the mode of successfully combating the formidable enemy with whom they had to contend. This declaration from so great a city, containing seventy thousand inhabitants, and embracing all the nobility of the south of Spain within its walls, was of the utmost consequence, and gave, both in reality and in the eyes of Europe, a degree of consistence to the insurrection which it could never otherwise have obtained.¹*

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.
June 6.

¹ Foy, iii.
201, 203.
South. i. 342,
346. Tor. x.
204, 207,
215. Espa-
nol. i. 13.

The first important blow struck at the French was delivered at Cadiz. The fleet there, consisting of five ships of the line and one frigate, the only existing remnant of that which had fought at Trafalgar, early excited the jealousy of the inhabitants, to whom the French flag had become an object of perfect abhorrence; while Lord Collingwood, at the head of the English squadron which lay off the harbour, effectually prevented their departure. To withdraw as far as possible from the danger, Rosilly, the French admiral, warped his ships in

45.
Capture of
the French
fleet at
Cadiz.
June 14.

* In this proclamation, which may be considered as the national declaration of Spain against France, it was not less justly than eloquently observed—"The King, to whom we all swore allegiance with emotions of joy unprecedented in history, has been decoyed from us; the fundamental laws of our monarchy have been trampled under foot: our property, customs, religion, laws, wives and children are threatened with destruction. And a foreign power has done this: done it, too, not by force of arms, but by deceit and treachery; by converting the very persons who call themselves the heads of our government into instruments of these atrocious acts. It therefore became indispensable to break our shackles; and to put forth that noble courage with which in all former ages the Spanish people have defended their monarch, their laws, their honour, their religion. The people of Seville have assembled, and, through the medium of all their magistrates and constituted authorities, and the most respectable individuals of every rank, formed this Supreme Council of Government. We accept the heroic trust; we swear to discharge it; and we reckon on the strength and energy of the whole nation. We have again proclaimed Ferdinand VII.; again sworn allegiance to him; sworn to die in his defence: this was the signal of our union, and it will prove the forerunner of happiness and glory to Spain.

Proclamation
of the Junta
of Seville
against Na-
poleon.

"The abdication, extorted by such detestable artifices from Ferdinand, was

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the canal of Caracca to such a distance as to be beyond the reach of the fire both of the castles and the fleet; and at the same time endeavoured, by negotiating, to gain time for the arrival of the succours under Dupont, which he was aware were rapidly approaching through la Mancha and the Sierra Morena. Equally sensible, however, with his skilful opponent, of the importance of time in the operation, the Spanish general Morla insisted upon an immediate surrender, and constructed batteries in such places as to command the French ships even in their new stations. Lord Collingwood, who, with the English fleet in the bay, was an impatient spectator of these hostile preparations, offered the assistance of the British squadron to insure the reduction of the enemy; but the offer was courteously declined, from a wish, no doubt, that England might have no ground for any claim to the prizes which were expected. At length, on the 9th June, a sufficient number of guns being mounted, a heavy fire was opened upon the French ships, which, as they lay in a situation where they could not make any reply, soon produced a sensible effect, and led to a

void, from want of authority in him who made it. The monarchy was not his to bestow, nor is Spain composed of animals subject to the absolute control of their owners. His title to the throne was founded on his royal descent and the fundamental laws of the realm. His resignation is void from the state of compulsion in which it was made, from the want of consent in the nation to which it related, from the want of concurrence in the foreign princes, the next heirs in succession to the throne. The French Emperor summoned a few deputies, devoted to himself, to deliberate in a foreign country, and surrounded by foreign bayonets, on the most sacred concerns of the nation; while he publicly declared a respectful letter, written to him by Ferdinand VII. when Prince of Asturias, was a criminal act, injurious to the rights of the sovereign! He has resorted to every other means to deceive us; he has distributed, with boundless profusion, libels to corrupt public opinion, in which, under the mask of respect for the laws and our holy religion, he covertly insults both. He assures us that the Supreme Pontiff sanctions his proceedings, while it is notorious that he has despoiled him of his dominions, and forced him to dismiss his cardinals to prevent him from conducting the government of the Church according to its fundamental constitution. Every consideration calls on us to unite and frustrate views so atrocious. No revolution exists in Spain; our sole object is to defend all we hold most sacred against the invader who would treacherously despoil us of our religion, our monarch, our laws. Let us therefore sacrifice everything in a cause so just; and if we are to lose all, let us lose

negotiation that terminated in the unconditional surrender of the whole fleet five days afterwards. Thus was the last remnant of that proud armament, which was intended to convey the invincible legions of Napoleon to the British shores, finally reft from the arms of France, and that, too, by the forces of the very allies who were then ranged by their side for the subjugation of England, but had since been alienated by his treacherous aggression.¹

In the northern provinces the insurrection spread with much fewer circumstances of atrocity, but an almost equal degree of enthusiasm. Excepting Barcelona, Figueras, San Sebastian, and a few other places, where the presence of the French garrisons overawed the people, they everywhere rose in arms against their oppressors. A junta for the Asturias was formed before the end of May at Oviedo, the capital of that province—the first which was organised in Spain, and which thus gave to its inhabitants a second time the honour of having taken the lead in the deliverance of the Peninsula. The first step of this body was to despatch deputies to England, soliciting arms, ammunition, and money, whose arrival produced an extraordinary impression, as will imme-

CHAP.
LIII.1808.
June 14.
1 Tor. i.
217, 218.
Foy, iii.
213, 214.
Colling-
wood, ii.
43.46.
Insurrection
in Asturias,
Galicia,
Catalonia,
and Aragon.

May 24.

it combating like brave men. Let all, therefore, unite : the wisest and ablest, in refuting the falsehoods propagated by the enemy ; the church, in imploring the assistance of the God of hosts ; the young and active in marching against the enemy. The Almighty will vouchsafe his protection to so just a cause ; Europe will applaud our efforts, and hasten to our assistance ; Italy, Germany, the North, suffering under the despotism of France, will eagerly avail themselves of the example set them by Spain to shake off the yoke, and recover their liberty, their laws, their independence, of which they have been robbed by that nation."

Special and prudent instructions were at the same time given for the conduct of the war. " All general actions are to be avoided as perfectly hopeless and highly dangerous : a war of partisans is what suits both our national character and physical circumstances. Each province should have its junta, its generals, its local government, but there should be three generals-in-chief ; one for Andalusia, Murcia, and Lower Estremadura ; one for Galicia, Leon, the Castiles, and Asturias ; one for Valencia, Aragon, and Catalonia. France has never domineered over us, nor set foot with impunity in our territory. We have often mastered her, not by deceit, but by force of arms ; we have made her kings prisoners, and the nation tremble. We are the same Spaniards, and France and Europe and the world shall see we have not degenerated from our ancestors."—*Proclamation of the Junta of Seville, June 6, 1808 ; SOUTHEY, i. 389, 393.*

Prudent in-
structions to
their troops.

CHAP.
LIII.1808.
May 29.

diately be shown, in the British isles. The junta of Galicia, secure behind their almost inaccessible mountains, took the most vigorous measures to organise the insurrection; and not only arrayed all the regular soldiers at Ferrol and Corunna under its standard, but summoned the Spanish troops in Portugal, ten thousand strong, to join them without delay—a summons which was immediately obeyed by the whole body, who set out for Galicia by the route of Tras-os-Montes, and thus laid the foundation of a powerful force on the flank and rear of the invaders' communications. A junta was formed at Lerida, which assumed the general direction of the affairs of Catalonia, and soon arrayed thirty thousand hardy mountaineers under the national colours; while, nothing daunted by the proximity to France, and the alarming vicinity of powerful French corps, the Aragonese proclaimed Ferdinand VII. at Saragossa; and after choosing for their commander the young and gallant Palafox, who had attended Ferdinand to Bayonne, and escaped from that fortress, issued a proclamation, in which they declared their resolution, should the royal family be detained in captivity or destroyed by Napoleon, of exercising their right of election in favour of the Archduke Charles, as grandson of Charles III. and one of the imperial branch of the Spanish family.¹

June 2.
¹ South. i.
337, 341,
372, 378.
Foy, iii.
190, 192.
Tor. i. 181,
195, 245,
250. Na-
pier, i. 57.

47.
Measures of
Napoleon in
regard to the
insurrec-
tion.

From the outset Napoleon was fully impressed with the importance and danger of this contest, and in an especial manner alive to the vital consequences of preserving entire the communications of the army, which had been pushed forward into the very heart of the kingdom, with the French frontier. Murat, after the catastrophe of 2d May, had been taken ill and withdrawn from Madrid, and was on his route to take possession of the throne destined for him on the shores of Naples. He had been succeeded in the general direction of the affairs at Madrid by Savary. Napoleon, on the departure of the latter from Bayonne, spoke to him in such a way as sufficiently

demonstrated his growing anxiety for the issue of the contest, as well as the sagacity with which he had already discerned in what way it was most likely to be brought to a successful issue.* Reinforcements were poured into Spain with all possible expedition; Burgos, Vitoria, and all the principal towns along the great road to Madrid from Bayonne, were strongly occupied; General Dupont, with his whole corps, was moved from la Mancha towards the Sierra Morena and Andalusia, in order to overawe Seville and Cordova, and if possible disengage the French squadron at Cadiz; and Marshal Moncey detached into Valencia, with instructions to put down, at all hazards, the violent and bloodthirsty insurrection which had burst forth in that province.¹

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

¹ Sav. iii.
247, 249.
Nap. i. 59.

But while making every preparation for military operations, the French Emperor, at the same time, actively pursued at Bayonne those civil changes to which, even more than the terror of his arms, he trusted for subjugating the minds of men in the Spanish peninsula. The Assembly of Notables met at that fortress on the 15th June, agreeably to the summons which they had received; and they comprised the principal nobility and a large proportion of the leading characters in Spain. Having been selected by the junta of government at Madrid, without the form even of any election by the people, they were entirely in the French interest, and the mere creatures of the Emperor's will. Their proceedings formed a singular and instructive contrast to the generous and fearless burst of indignant hostility with which the

48.
Proceedings
of the No-
tables as-
sembled at
Bayonne.
June 15.

* "The essential point," said he, "at this moment, is to occupy as many places as possible, in order to have the means of diffusing the principles which we wish to inculcate upon the people; but, to avoid the dangers of such a dispersion of force, you must be wise, moderate, and observe the strictest discipline. For God's sake, permit no pillage. I have heard nothing of the line which Castanos, who commands at the camp of St Roque, will take; Murat has promised much on that head, but you know what reliance is to be placed on his assurances. Neglect nothing which can secure the rapidity and exactness of your communications—that is the cardinal point; and spare nothing which can secure you good information. Above all, take care to avoid any misfortune; its consequences would be incalculable."—SAVARY, iii. 247, 251.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

June 8.
 1 Nell. ii.
 214, 219.
 Thib. vi.
 395, 399.
 South. i.
 400.

resignations at Bayonne had been received by the middle and lower orders through the whole of Spain. Even before the Assembly had formally met, such of them as had arrived at Bayonne published an address to their countrymen, in which they indulged in the usual vein of flattery to the astonishing abilities and power of the august Emperor, and strongly advised them to accept his brother for their sovereign.¹ *

49.
 General
 recognition
 of Joseph
 by the
 Spanish
 Notables.

The levees of Joseph were attended by all the chief grandees of Spain; every day appeared to add to the strength of the party who were inclined to support his elevation to the throne. All the principal counsellors of Ferdinand, Cevallos, Escoiquiz, and others, not only took the oath of allegiance to the new monarch, but petitioned to be allowed to retain their honours and employments under the French dynasty.† The Spanish corps in Holstein took the oath of allegiance to Joseph; but under a reservation that his appointment was ratified by a free Cortes, convened in Spain according to the fundamental customs of the monarchy. A proclamation was issued by the new king, in which he accepted the cession of the

June 17.

June 10.

Proclamation
 of the gran-
 dees of Spain
 to their coun-
 trymen.

* "An irresistible sense of duty, an object as sacred as it is important, has made us quit our homes, and led us to the invincible Emperor of the French. We admit it—the sight of his glory, of his power, was fitted to dazzle us; but we arrived here already determined to address to him our reiterated supplications for the prosperity of a monarchy of which the fate is inseparably united with our own. But judge of our surprise, when we were received by his imperial and royal Majesty with a degree of kindness and humanity not less admirable than his power. He has no other desire but that of our preservation and happiness. If he gives us a sovereign to govern us, it is his august brother Joseph, whose virtues are the admiration of his subjects. If he is engaged in modifying and correcting our institutions, it is in order that we may live in peace and happiness. If he is desirous that our finances should receive a new organisation, it is in order to render our navy and army powerful and formidable to our enemies. Spaniards! worthy of a better lot, avoid the terrible anarchy which threatens you. What benefit can you derive from the troubles fomented by malevolence or folly? Anarchy is the greatest curse which God can inflict upon mankind: during its reign unbridled license sacks, destroys, burns everything: worthy citizens, men of property are invariably the first victims, and an abyss of horror follows its triumphs."—*Proclamation of the Grandees of Spain to their Countrymen, dated Bayonne, 8th June 1808; NELLERTO, ii. 214, No. 70.*

† "The subscribers have given the strongest proofs of their fidelity to the

crown of Spain, made to him by his august brother Napoleon I., and appointed Murat his lieutenant-general. It is a curious circumstance that Joseph and Murat were equally averse to the thrones thus forced upon them; for the former was most anxious to retain that of Naples, and the latter coveted nothing so much as that of Madrid. But the great powers of the Continent were already prepared for the change, and did not venture to utter even a whisper against it. The consent of Russia was already secured to all the changes in the Peninsula, by the promise of acquiescence in her conquests in Finland and Turkey; and, in order to reconcile the other courts in Europe to them, an elaborate circular note was addressed to their respective cabinets, in which it was announced that "the occupation of the kingdoms of Spain and Portugal, the regeneration of these fine nations, the creation of the fleets of Cadiz and the Tagus, would be a mortal stroke to the power of England, and put the finishing hand to the triumph of the maritime system, in which all the Continental powers were so warmly interested." Finally, on the 15th June, ninety-two deputies, out of the one hundred and fifty summoned, assembled at Bayonne, and formally accepted the constitution prepared for them by the Emperor Napoleon.¹

By this constitution it was provided that the crown was to be vested in Joseph and his heirs-male; whom failing, in the Emperor and his heirs-male; and in

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

¹ Thib. vi.
395, 401.
South. i.
400, 409.
Nell. ii. 214,
224, 226.
Thiers, viii.
652.

former government; they trust it will be considered as the surest pledge of the sincerity of the oath which they now take of obedience to the new constitution of their country, and fidelity to the King of Spain, Joseph I. The generosity of your Catholic Majesty, your goodness and humanity, induce them to hope that, considering the need which these princes have of a continuation of their services in the situations which they respectively held under the old dynasty, the magnanimity of your august Majesty will induce you to continue them in the enjoyment of the estates and offices which they formerly held. Assured thus of the continuance of the posts which they have hitherto enjoyed, they will ever prove faithful subjects to your Majesty, and true Spaniards, ready to obey *blindly even the smallest wish which your Majesty may express.*" (Signed) SAN CARLOS, JUAN ESCOQUIZ, MARQUIS AYERLEE, and others, 22d June 1808. —NELLERTO, i. 250, 251.

Degrading
letter of
Escoiquiz
and Ferdi-
nand's coun-
sellors to
Joseph.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

50.

Constitu-
tion given
at Bayonne
by Napo-
leon to the
Spaniards.

default of both, in the other brothers of the imperial family, in their order of seniority, but under the condition that the crown of Spain was not to be united on the same head with another. The legislature was to consist of a Senate of eighty members, nominated by the king : a Cortes composed of one hundred and seventy-two members, arranged in the following proportions and order,—twenty-five archbishops and bishops, and twenty-five grandees, on the first bench ; sixty-two deputies of the provinces of Spain and the Indies ; thirty of the principal towns ; fifteen of the merchants and manufacturers ; and fifteen of the arts and sciences. The first fifty, composing the peers, were appointed by the king, but could not be displaced by him ; the second class was elected by the provinces and municipalities ; the third was appointed by the king out of lists presented to him by the tribunals and chambers of commerce, and the universities. The deliberations of the Cortes were not to be public ; none of their proceedings were to be published, under the penalties of high treason ; the finances and expenditure were to be settled by them at one sitting for three years ; the colonies were constantly to have a deputation of twenty-two persons at the seat of government to watch over their interests ; all exclusive exemptions from taxation were abolished ; entails permitted only to the amount of twenty thousand piastres (£2,000) yearly, and with the consent of the king ; an alliance, offensive and defensive, was concluded with France, and a promise held out of the establishment of the liberty of the press within two years after the commencement of the new constitution.¹

¹ See Constitution of Bayonne, Thib. vi. 402, 403 ; and Tor. i. 292, 295. Thiers, viii. 655.

Everything was conducted by the junta of Notables at Bayonne to the entire satisfaction of Napoleon. The grandees of Spain rivalled his own senate in graceful adulation of his achievements, in obsequious submission to his will. When the constitution was read to them, it was received with transport, and adopted by acclamation.

Thunders of applause shook the hall when the new king made his appearance in his royal robes ; when he retired, two medals were unanimously voted to record the memorable acts of Bayonne ; and the assembly, in a body, hastened to the Emperor to lay at his feet the homage of their gratitude for the unparalleled services which he had rendered to their country. There was in the flattery of the Spanish nobles a mixture of studied servility with Oriental grandiloquence, which was novel and agreeable to a sovereign toward whom had been exhausted all the arts of European adulation.* Two days after, the new king set out for the capital of his dominions ; he was accompanied as far as the frontier by his imperial brother and a splendid cortège of a hundred carriages, and crossed the Bidassoa amidst the roar of artillery and all the pomp of more than regal magnificence. On the 20th, Napoleon himself set out from Bayonne, having first given such instructions to Savary as he deemed sufficient to bring the insurrection, which had now broken out on all sides, to a successful issue ; and returned by Pau, where he visited the birthplace of Henry IV., Bordeaux, la Vendée, the mouth of the Loire, Nantes, and Tours, to St Cloud, which he reached in the middle of August. Meanwhile Ferdinand VII., resigning himself to his chains, wrote to the Emperor from Valençay, thanking him for his condescension, and requesting permission to meet him on his route to lay

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

51.

Proceedings
of Napoleon,
Joseph, and
the Junta of
Notables, at
Bayonne.
July 7.

July 9,

July 20.

Aug. 14.

July 26.

* "Sire !" said M. Azanza, the President of the Notables, "the junta of Spain has accomplished the glorious task for which your Majesty convened it in this city. It has accepted, with as much eagerness as freedom, the great charter which fixes upon a sure foundation the happiness of Spain. Happily for our country, an overruling Providence has employed your irresistible hand to snatch it from the abyss into which it was about to be precipitated. It is well that it was irresistible ; for an inexplicable blindness has caused those who ought most to rejoice at this benefit to misapprehend it. But all Spain, Sire ! will open its eyes. It will see that it required a total regeneration, and that from your Majesty alone it could obtain it. Public evil was at its height ; the agents of a feeble government devoured the public patrimony, or extended unceasingly the limits of arbitrary power : the finances were a chaos ; the public debt an abyss ; the period of total dissolution was approaching. To what other power but that

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

Aug. 1.
 1 See the
 Letter in
 Nell. ii. 262.
 Thib. vi. 406,
 408. Tor. i.
 294, 295.

his homage at his feet,* which was not granted; and Charles IV., after testifying his entire satisfaction with the palace, parks, and country around Compiègne, requested permission, on account of his health, to pass the winter in a warmer climate, which was graciously accorded. In the autumn he moved to Marseilles, where he lingered out in ease and obscurity the remainder of his inglorious life.¹

52.

New minis-
 try of Jo-
 seph, and
 his journey
 to, and ar-
 rival and
 reception at
 Madrid.

The ministry appointed by Joseph, before his departure from Bayonne, was mainly taken from the counsellors of the Prince of Asturias; and this selection, joined to their ready acceptance of their new dignities, throws a dark shade of doubt over the fidelity with which they had served that unhappy prince, during his brief but eventful possession of the throne. Don Luis de Urquijo was made secretary of state; Don Pedro Cevallos, minister for foreign affairs; Don Sebastian de Pinuela, and Don Gonzalo O'Farrel, ministers of justice and at war; Don Miguel Azanza obtained the colonies, and Mazaredo the marine. Even Escoiquiz wrote to Joseph protesting his devotion to him, and declaring that he and the rest of Ferdinand's household "were willing to obey his will blindly, down to the minutest particulars." The Duke del Infantado was appointed to the command of the Spanish, and the Prince Castel-Franco to that of the Walloon Guards. Joseph entered Spain surrounded by the highest grandees and most illustrious names of Spain. He reached

July 22.

of your imperial and royal Majesty could it be reserved, not merely to arrest the evil, but entirely to remove it? Such are the wonders, Sire, which you have wrought in a few days, and which fill the world with astonishment."—SOUTHEY, i. 436, 437.

* "My uncle and brother have been equally charmed with myself at the announcement of the arrival of your imperial and royal Majesty at Pau, which brings us nearer your presence; and since, whatever route you choose, you must pass near this, we should regard it as a very great satisfaction if your imperial and royal Majesty would permit us to meet you, and renew in person that homage of sincere attachment and respect which we all feel, if it is not inconvenient."—FERDINAND VII. to NAPOLEON, 26th July 1808; NELLERTO, ii. 262. Napoleon, however, declined the honour, and never again saw Ferdinand or any of his family.

Madrid on the 20th, having lingered for several days at Burgos and Vitoria, and received there the oaths of allegiance from the Council of State, the Council of the Indies, and that of the finances. But though surrounded by the nobles, his reception in the capital was melancholy in the extreme. Orders had been given that the houses of the inhabitants should be decked out to receive their new sovereign, but very few obeyed the injunction. A crowd assembled to see the brilliant cortège and splendid guards which accompanied the King, but no cheers or applauses were heard. Every countenance bore a mournful expression; hardly any ladies appeared at the windows, notwithstanding the passionate fondness of the Spanish women for such displays. The bells of all the churches rang together, but they resembled rather the dismal toll at the interment of the dead, than the merry chime which announces a joyful event to the living.¹

To the honour of Spain and of human nature it must be stated, that, in the midst of this humiliating scene of aristocratic baseness, some sparks of an independent spirit were elicited, and some men in high station asserted the ancient honour of the Spanish character. When the Duke del Infantado, at the head of the *grandees* of the monarchy, delivered their address to the new sovereign, he concluded it with these words:—"The laws of Spain do not permit us to go farther at present. We await the decision of the nation, which can alone authorise us to give a freer vent to our sentiments." No words can convey an idea of the anger of Napoleon at this unexpected reservation. Instantly approaching the Duke, he said, "As you are a gentleman, you should conduct yourself as such; and instead of disputing here on the words of an oath, which you will doubtless violate as soon as you have an opportunity, you would do better to withdraw at once, put yourself at the head of your party, and combat there openly and honourably. But you may rest assured, that if you take an oath here, and afterwards fail in its per-

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.
July 20.

¹ Thib. vi.
427. Tor. i.
355. South.
i. 482.

53.
Honourable
instances of
resistance to
the general
torrent of
adulation in
his favour
among the
grandees.

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

formance, before eight days you shall be shot." This violent apostrophe produced the desired intimidation; the address was corrected, and delivered in the form above mentioned, by Azanza; but the Duke retained his opinions, and ere long appeared in the ranks of his country. The Council of Castile prefaced their address by the fulsome expression,—“Your Majesty is one of the principal branches of a family destined by heaven to reign over mankind;” but they eluded, by alleging want of authority, the simple and unqualified taking of the oath of allegiance. Jovellanos, who had been liberated by the resignation of Charles IV. and the fall of Godoy from his long captivity in the dungeons of Minorca, was offered by Joseph the portfolio of the minister of the interior. But the lengthened sufferings of that incorruptible patriot, under an oppressive government, could not blind him to the injustice now attempted by his deliverers, and he declared his resolution to abide by the fortunes of his suffering countrymen rather than accept wealth and greatness from their oppressors.* The Bishop of Orense, when nominated as one of the junta to proceed to Bayonne by the regency of Madrid, returned an answer declining the honour, in such independent and elevated terms as must for ever command the respect of the generous among mankind.^{1†}

¹ Tor. i. 281,
299, 413.
Pièces Just.

* “I am resolved,” said he, in reply to the reiterated instances of Joseph and his ministers, “to decline the place in the administration which you offer me: and I am convinced that you will strive in vain to overcome the resistance, by means of exhortations, of a people so brave and resolute to recover their liberties. Even if the cause of my country were as desperate as you suppose it, it will never cease to be that of honour and loyalty, and that which every good Spaniard should embrace at any hazard.”—TORENO, i. 299.

† “Spain,” said this courageous prelate, in his letter to the junta at Madrid, “now sees in the French Emperor the oppressor of its princes and its own tyrant; it feels itself enslaved, while it is told of its happiness: and these chains it owes even less to perfidy, than to the presence of an army which it admitted to its strongholds when on terms of perfect amity. The nation is without a king, and knows not which way to turn. The abdication of its sovereign, and the appointment of Murat as Lieutenant-general of the kingdom, all took place in France amidst foreign armies, and under the eyes of an Emperor who conceived he was bestowing prosperity on Spain by placing on her throne a prince of his

Memorable
answer of the
Bishop of
Orense to his
summons to
Bayonne.

Future ages will find it difficult to credit the enthusiasm and transport with which the tidings of the insurrection in Spain were received in the British islands. The earliest accounts were brought by the Asturian deputies, who reached London in the first week of June; and their reports were speedily confirmed and extended by further accounts from Corunna, Cadiz, and Gibraltar. Never was public joy more universal. As the intelligence successively arrived of province after province having risen in indignant fury against the invader, and boldly hoisted the flag of defiance to his legions, the general rapture knew no bounds. It was evident now, even to the most ordinary capacity, that the revolutionary ambition of France had brought it into violent collision with the patriotic and religious feelings of a high-spirited and virgin people. "Never," says Southey, "since the glorious morning of the French Revolution, before one bloody cloud had risen to overcast the deceitful promise of its beauty, had the heart of England been affected by so generous and universal a joy." All classes joined in it; all degrees of intellect were swept away by the flood. The aristocratic party who had so long struggled, with almost hopeless constancy, against the ever-advancing wave of revolutionary ambition, rejoiced that it had at last broke on a rugged shore;¹ and that, in the insolence of apparently unbounded power, it had proceeded to such

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

54.

Universal
joy with
which the
news of the
insurrection
is received
in England.

¹ South. i.
443, 444.
Ann. Reg.
1808, 1809.

own family. The supreme junta has against it a thousand rumours, besides its armed president, and the troops which surround it; all which forbids its acts being regarded as those of a free assembly. The same may be said of the councils and tribunals of justice. What a chaos of confusion, of misfortunes to Spain! and will these misfortunes be avoided by an assembly held without the kingdom, convened in a situation where its deliberations can never be regarded as free? And if to the tumultuous movements which menace the interior of the kingdom, we add the pretensions of princes and powers abroad, and the probable intervention of a foreign armed force in the contest of which the Peninsula will soon be the theatre, what can be imagined more frightful, or more worthy of pity? Cannot the love and solicitude of the Emperor find some other mode of manifesting itself than by such measures as will lead to its ruin rather than its cure?"—*Answer of PEDRO, Bishop of Orense, to the Junta of Government at Madrid, which had named him as representative at Bayonne, May 29, 1808; TORENO, i. 413, 414—Pièces Just.*

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

55.

Enthusiasm
of the popu-
lar party in
the cause.

extremities as had roused the impassioned resistance of a gallant people.

The lovers of freedom hailed the Peninsular contest as the first real effort of THE PEOPLE in the war. Former contests had lain between cabinets and armies on the one side, and democratic zeal, ripened into military prowess, on the other. But now the case was changed. It was no longer a struggle for the power of kings or the privileges of nobles ; the energy of the multitude was roused into action, the spirit of liberty was enlisted in the cause ; the mighty lever which had shaken all the thrones of Europe had now, by the imprudence of him who wielded it, fallen into the hands of the enemy ; it would cast down the fabric of imperial, as it has done that of regal power. With honest zeal and fervent sympathy, the great body of the British people united heart and soul with the gallant nation which, with generous, perhaps imprudent enthusiasm, had rushed into the contest for their country's independence, and loudly called on the government to take their station by their side, and stake all upon the issue of so heart-stirring a conflict. Meanwhile the few sagacious and well-informed observers, whom the general transport permitted to take a cool survey of the probable issue of the contest, observed with satisfaction that the ambition of the French Emperor had at length offered a sea-girt and mountainous region for a battle-field, where the numerical inferiority of the British armies would expose them to less disadvantage than in any other theatre of European warfare.¹

¹ South. i.
443, 444.
Ann. Reg.
1808, 193,
195.

56.
Noble
speech of
Mr Sheri-
dan on the
Spanish war
in parlia-
ment,
June 15.

The first notice taken of these animating events, in the British parliament, was on the 15th June, when the subject was introduced in a splendid speech by Mr Sheridan, which merely embodied, in glowing language, the feelings which then, with unprecedented unanimity, agitated the British heart. "Never before," he exclaimed, "has so happy an opportunity existed for Great Britain to strike a bold stroke for the rescue of the world. Hitherto

Buonaparte has run a victorious race, because he has contended with princes without dignity, ministers without wisdom, or people without patriotism; he has yet to learn what it is to combat a people who are animated with one spirit against him. Now is the time to stand up boldly and fairly for the deliverance of Europe; and if the ministry will co-operate effectually with the Spanish patriots, they shall receive from me as cordial a support as if the man¹ whom I most loved were restored to life. ¹ Mr Fox.

Will not the animation of the Spanish mind be excited by the knowledge that their cause is espoused, not by the ministers merely, but by the parliament and the people of England? If there be a disposition in Spain to resent the insults and injuries, too enormous to be described by language, which they have endured from the tyrant of the earth, will not that disposition be roused to the most sublime exertion by the assurance that their efforts will be cordially aided by a great and powerful nation? Never was anything so brave, so noble, so generous, as the conduct of the Spaniards; never was there a more important crisis than that which their patriotism has thus occasioned to the state of Europe. Instead of striking at the core of the evil, the administrations of this country have hitherto gone on nibbling merely at the rind; filching sugar islands, but neglecting all that was dignified, and consonant to the real interests of the country. Now, therefore, is the moment to let the world know that we are resolved to stand up, firmly and fairly, for the salvation of Europe. Let us, then, co-operate with the Spaniards, but co-operate in an effectual and energetic way; and if we find that they are really resolved to engage heart and soul in the enterprise, advance with them in a magnanimous way and with an undaunted step for the liberation of mankind. Formerly, the contest in la Vendée afforded the fairest chance of effecting the deliverance of Europe; but that favourable chance was neglected by this country. What was then neglected was

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¹ Parl. Deb.
xi. 886, 889.

now looked up to with sanguine expectation ; the only hope now was, that Spain might prove another la Vendée. Above all, let us mix no little interests with this mighty contest ; let us discard or forget British objects, and conduct the war on the great principles of generous support and active co-operation.”¹

57.
Reply of Mr
Secretary
Canning.

These noble sentiments, worthy of the real friends of freedom and the leaders of the liberal party in its last asylum, were fully responded to by the members of administration. Mr Secretary Canning replied,—“ His Majesty’s ministers see with as deep and lively an interest as my right honourable friend the noble struggle which the Spanish nation are now making to resist the unexampled atrocity of France, and preserve the independence of their country ; and there exists the strongest disposition on the part of the British government to afford every practicable aid in a contest so magnanimous. In endeavouring to afford this aid, it will never occur to us to consider that a state of war exists between this country and Spain. Whenever any nation in Europe starts up with a determination to oppose a power which, whether professing insidious peace or declaring open war, is alike the common enemy of all other people, that nation, whatever its former relation may be, becomes, *ipso facto*, the ally of Great Britain. In furnishing the aid which may be required, government will be guided by three principles—to direct the united efforts of both countries against the common foe—to direct them in such a way as shall be most beneficial to our new ally—and to direct them to such objects as may be most conducive to British interests. But of these objects the last will never be allowed to come into competition with the other two. I mention British objects, chiefly for the purpose of disclaiming them as any material part of the considerations which influence the British government.”² No interest can be so purely British as Spanish success ; no conquest so advantageous to England as conquering from France the com-

² Parl. Deb.
xi. 890, 891,
895.

plete integrity of Spanish dominions in every quarter of the globe."

This debate marks in more ways than one an important era in the war, and indicates a remarkable change in the sentiments with which it was regarded by a large portion of the liberal party in the British dominions. There were no longer any apologies for Napoleon, or the principles of the Revolution; no deprecation of any attempt to resist the power of France, as in the earlier periods of the war. The eloquent declamations of Mr Fox and Mr Erskine in favour of the great republic—their sophistical excuses for the grasping ambition in which its fervour had terminated—had expired. Experience and suffering, danger and difficulty, had in a great degree subdued even political passion—the strongest feeling, save religious, which can agitate mankind. Mr Sheridan and Mr Wyndham from the *Opposition* benches, earnestly called on the government to engage deeply in the war; they loudly and justly condemned the selfish policy and Lilliputian expeditions of the aristocratic government in its earlier years, and demanded, in the name of public freedom, that England should at last take her appropriate place in the van of the conflict, and, disregarding all selfish or exclusively national objects, stand forth with all her might for the deliverance of mankind.

In such sentiments from such men, none but the vulgar and superficial could see any inconsistency with their former opinions. Whatever others might do, it was not to be supposed that the highest intellects and most generous hearts in the empire were to gaze all day at the East in hopes of still seeing the sun rise there. Resistance to French despotism and invasion was not only not inconsistent with, but necessarily flowed from, the real principles of the ardent philanthropists who had formerly opposed the overshadowing what they then deemed the brilliant dawn of the French Revolution. But it had the appearance of change to the numerous class who judge by

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58.
Reflections
on this
debate.

59.
Consistence
of these
views with
the true
principles
of freedom.

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words instead of things, and are attached, not to abstract principles, but to actual parties ; and, therefore, the enunciation of such sentiments by any of the Whig leaders not only was an honourable instance of moral courage, but evinced a remarkable change in the general feeling of their party. Not less clearly was the disclaiming of interested views or British objects by the ministerial chiefs, an indication of the arrival of that period in the contest, when the generous passions were at length aroused, and the fervent warmth of popular feeling had melted or overcome that frigid attention to interested views, which, not less than their tenacity and perseverance, is the uniform characteristic of aristocratic governments among mankind.

60.
Budget for
1808.

Animated by such powerful support, from the quarter where it was least expected, to enter vigorously into the contest, the English government made the most liberal provision for its prosecution. The supplies voted for the war-charges amounted to the enormous sum of £48,300,000 ; to meet which, ways and means to the value of £48,400,000, were voted by parliament ; and the total income of the year 1808, including the ordinary and permanent revenue, was estimated at £86,780,000, and the expenditure £84,797,000. The loan was £10,102,000 for England, and £2,000,000 for Ireland, and the new taxes imposed only £300,000 ; the Chancellor of the Exchequer having adhered, in a great measure, to the system approved of by both sides of the House in the finance debates of the preceding year, of providing for the increased charges of the year and the interest of the loans, in part at least, by an impignoration, in time of peace, of the war taxes. A subsidy of £1,100,000 was provided for the King of Sweden. But these sums, great as they are, convey no adequate idea of the expenditure of this eventful year ; the budget was arranged in April, before the Spanish contest had arisen ;¹ and for the vast expenses with which it was attended, and which, not

April 14.
¹ Parl. Deb.
xi. 14, 21,
and App.
No. I. Ann.
Reg. 1808,
103, 105.
Marshall's
Tables.
Statement,
No. I.

having been foreseen, had not been provided for, there was no resource but a liberal issue of Exchequer bills, which fell as an oppressive burden upon future years.*

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1808.

The supplies of all sorts sent out during this year to the Spanish patriots, though in great part misapplied or wasted, were on a princely scale of liberality, and worthy of the exalted station which, by consent of all parties, England now took at the head of the alliance. In every province of the Peninsula juntas were established, and to all British envoys were sent, who made as minute inquiries into the wants and capabilities of the district as the circumstances would admit, and received ample powers from government to afford such aid, either in money, arms, clothing, or warlike stores, as they deemed it expedient to demand. Military supplies of every description were, in consequence of these requisitions, sent to Corunna, Santander, Cadiz, Gibraltar, Valencia, Malaga, and other places, with a profusion which astonished the inhabitants, and gave them at least ample means to fit themselves out for the contest in which they were engaged.† It may readily be conceived, that from the enthusiasm and animation of the insurgent provinces, and the universal transport with which the British envoys were received, abundance of room was afforded for misrepresentation or delusion; that the accounts transmitted to government must, in many cases, have been inaccurate; and that, amidst the extraordinary profusion with which supplies of

61.
Immense
extent of
the supplies
which were
sent out to
Spain from
Great Bri-
tain.

* Appendix A, Chap. LIII.

† The following is a statement of the sums of money and warlike stores sent by Great Britain to the Peninsula, from the beginning of the contest in June 1808, to the commencement of 1809:—

Subsidies in money, £3,100,000			
Pieces of cannon,	. . . 98	Pikes,	. . . 79,000
Cannon-balls,	. . . 31,000	Cartridges,	. . . 23,477,000
Mortars,	. . . 38	Leaden balls,	. . . 6,000,000
Mortar charges,	. . . 7,200	Barrels of powder,	. . . 15,400
Carronades,	. . . 80	Haversacks,	. . . 34,000
Muskets,	. . . 200,177	Canteens,	. . . 50,000
Carbines,	. . . 220	Infantry accoutrements,	. . . 39,000
Sabres,	. . . 61,300	Tents,	. . . 40,000

Continued.

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1808.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1808, 184.
Hard. x. 190,
192. Lond.
i. 102.

62.
Beneficial
effects with
which these
efforts were
attended.

all sorts were poured into the country, there were many opportunities afforded to the native authorities of fraud or embezzlement, of which, amidst the general confusion, they were not slow to avail themselves. In truth, lamentable experience afterwards demonstrated that a large proportion of these magnificent supplies was misapplied or neglected. The money was in great part embezzled or squandered, the stores sold or wasted, the arms piled and forgotten in magazines, when the patriots in the field were in want of the most necessary part of military equipment.¹

Still, with all these evils, inseparable probably from the condition of a country thus driven into a dreadful contest in the absence of any regular government, and unavoidably thrown under the direction of local and recently elected authorities, alike destitute of the knowledge, unacquainted with the arrangements, and relieved from the responsibility requisite for the faithful discharge of official duty, the prodigal bounty of England was attended with the most important effects upon the progress of the strife. It removed at once the imputation of cautious and prudential policy, which the incessant declamations of the French writers during the former periods of the war, joined to the feeble temporising measures of preceding cabinets, had so strongly affixed to the British name. It demonstrated the sincerity and energy of a government which thus, with unprecedented profusion, spread abroad in every quarter the means of resistance;² and inspired boundless confidence in the resources of a power which, great at all

² Tor. i. 301,
307. Ann.
Reg. 1808,
104. Hard.
x. 191, 193,
236. Lond.
i. 102.

Field equipages, . . .	10,000	Shirts,	35,000
Ells of linen, . . .	113,000	Cotton, pieces, . . .	22,000
— of cloth, . . .	125,000	Pairs of shoes, . . .	96,000
— of cotton, . . .	82,000	Soles of shoes, . . .	15,000
Cloaks,	50,000	Hats and bonnets, . .	16,000
Coats and trousers, .	92,000	Cartridge-boxes, . . .	240,000

—See *Parl. Pap.* July 16, 1808; and HARD. x. 492—*Pièces Just.*

In addition to these immense national supplies, private subscriptions were entered into in the chief towns of the empire, and large sums collected and remitted from the British islands to the Spanish patriots.—*Annual Register*, 1808, 195.

times, seemed capable of gigantic expansion at the decisive moment, and appeared rather to have increased than diminished from a contest of fifteen years' duration.

Nor were these great efforts on the part of the British government either unnecessary or uncalled for; for the forces, both military and naval, which Napoleon had now arrayed for their subjugation were immense. If the contest were not fixed in the Peninsula, it was plain that it would ere long approach the English shores. All his preparations in every quarter were intended to procure the accumulation of a force which might, by sea and land, overmatch the British empire. The moment his troops entered Spain, his orders were directed to this object. He sent funds from Paris for the construction of two sail of the line at Carthagena; Spain was to furnish two magnificent three-deckers, the *Santa Anna* and *San Carlos*: these, with the five French ships at Cadiz and six Spanish, and other ships afloat in the Spanish harbours, would produce a force of eighteen ships of the line ready for sea. The Carthagena fleet, which had taken refuge at Port Mahon, consisting of six line-of-battle ships, was directed forthwith to put to sea and join the Toulon squadron, already consisting of twelve in very good condition. Junot received the most pressing orders to equip immediately two line-of-battle ships left at Lisbon when the royal family embarked. "Consider it your first glory," wrote Napoleon to Murat, "during your short administration, to have reanimated the Spanish marine. It is the best way to attach the Spaniards to us, and to justify our occupation of their territory."¹

These preparations in the Peninsula were but a part of the vast designs which the French Emperor had formed and matured at this period for the overthrow of the British empire, and which the Spanish war alone prevented being carried into execution. The nine Russian ships of the line under Admiral Siniavin at Lisbon were to be reinforced by three Portuguese, seized

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1808.

63.
Vast preparations of Napoleon for the war against England in the Peninsular harbours.

¹ Nap. to Murat, March 17, 1808. Thiers, viii. 640, 641, 644.

64.
His general designs by sea and land against Great Britain.

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in the dockyards of Lisbon. Four ships of the line were ready for sea at Rochefort; four were at l'Orient; and at Brest, seven line-of-battle ships, in good order, remained of its once formidable squadron. Eight splendid new vessels, constructed at Antwerp, lay in the basin of Flushing; twelve were in the course of construction in the Scheldt. At the Texel, Louis Napoleon had eight ships of the line in excellent condition ready for sea, and the Russians had twelve in the Adriatic; while the flotilla at Boulogne was still capable of transporting 80,000 men, with all their guns and equipments, across the Channel. In addition to these considerable naval forces, orders were given for the construction, with the utmost possible expedition, of thirty-five more in the various harbours from the Sound to the Texel. In this way he hoped to have a hundred and thirty-one ships of the line ready for sea before the end of the year, which were to be increased annually by twenty-five or thirty more, till they acquired a decided preponderance over the British navy. Three hundred thousand land troops were to be stationed in the neighbourhood of the principal harbours from Copenhagen to Venice, ready to embark at a moment's warning on board their various squadrons, and either by a concentrated effort menace at once the independence of Great Britain, or distract its fleets by threatening its numerous colonial dependencies. Such were the designs of Napoleon, and such the means at his disposal, when the Peninsular war arose, and England, under the guidance of Wellington, began on the fields of Spain to contend hand to hand with the conqueror of continental Europe, and the descendants of those who conquered at Hastings met the sons of those who triumphed at Cressy and Azincour!¹

¹ Thiers, viii. 644, 645.

CHAPTER LIV.

NAPOLEON'S FIRST DISASTERS IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

No sooner was Napoleon made aware, by the general progress and formidable character of the insurrection, that a serious contest awaited him, than he set about, with all his usual caution and ability, preparing the means of overcoming its difficulties. Bessières received orders to put Burgos into a state of defence, to detach Lefebvre Desnottes, with five thousand foot and eight hundred horse, against Saragossa, and to move his main body so as to overawe the insurgents in Biscay, Asturias, and Old Castile. A reinforcement of nine thousand men was prepared for Duhesme in Catalonia, which it was hoped would enable him to make head against the enemy in that quarter. A reserve was organised, under General Drouet, on the Pyrenean frontier of Navarre, which, besides affording Bessières continual additions of force, placed five thousand men in the openings of the valleys towards the castle of Jaca, which was in possession of the enemy; another reserve was established in Perpignan, and detachments were stationed in the eastern passes of the mountains. The communications and rear being thus adequately provided for, Marshal Moncey was directed, with part of his corps, to move upon Cuença, so as to prevent any communication between the patriots of Valencia and Saragossa, and subsequently threaten the former city; while Dupont, with two divisions of his corps, ten thou-

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I.

Military
measures
adopted by
Napoleon
against the
insurrec-
tion.

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¹ Napoleon's
Orders. Nap-
pier, i. App.
No. 2. Ibid.
i. 60. Foy,
iii. 265, 266.

sand strong, received orders to proceed across the Sierra Morena towards Cordova and Seville. The remainder of his corps and of that of Moncey was stationed in reserve in La Mancha, to keep up the communications of the divisions pushed forward, and be in readiness, if necessary, to support either which might require assistance. With so much foresight and caution did the great commander distribute his forces, even against an insurgent peasantry, and an enemy at that period deemed wholly unable to withstand the shock of his veteran legions.¹

2.
Successful
operations
of Bessières
and Frère
in Old
Castile and
Leon against
the insur-
gents.

The first military operations of any importance were those of Marshal Bessières in Biscay and Old Castile. That able officer was at Burgos with twelve thousand men, when the insurrection broke out with great violence in all directions around him. At the same moment he received advices that a body of five thousand armed men had got possession of the important depot of artillery at Segovia, and another assemblage of equal force was arming itself from the royal manufactory of arms at Palencia; while General Cuesta, the captain-general of the province, with a few regiments of regular troops and a strong body of undisciplined peasantry, had taken post at Cabeçon on the Pisuerga. These positions appeared to Savary, who was now the chief in command at Madrid, so alarming, as threatening the communications of the French with the capital and all the southern provinces, that he detached General Frère with his division, forming part of Dupont's corps, in all haste to Segovia, where he routed the peasantry, and made himself master of all the artillery they had taken from the arsenal, amounting to thirty pieces. Meanwhile Bessières divided his disposable force into several movable columns, which, issuing from Burgos as a centre, traversed the country in all directions, everywhere defeating and disarming the insurgents, and reinstating the French authorities whom they had dispossessed. One of these divisions, under Verdier, routed the enemy at Logrono, and, with inhuman and unjustifiable

June 6.

June 6.

cruelty, put all their leaders to death; another, under Lasalle, broke the armed peasantry at Torquemada, burned the town, pursued them with merciless severity, and entered Palencia on the day following; while a third, under Merle, uniting with Lasalle, made straight for Cuesta at Cabeçon, who accepted battle, but was speedily overthrown, and his whole new levies dispersed, with the loss of all their artillery and several thousand muskets, which were thrown away in the pursuit.¹

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LIV.

1808.
June 7.

June 12.
¹ Napier, i.
62, 63. Foy,
iii. 269. Tor.
i. 300.

By these successes the whole level country in the upper part of the valley of the Douro was overawed and reduced to submission. Segovia, Valladolid, Palencia, and all the principal towns which had revolted, were compelled to send deputies to take the oath of allegiance to Joseph; and the terrible French dragoons, dispersing through the smaller towns and villages, diffused such universal consternation, that all the flat country in this quarter submitted to King Joseph and the French. Requisitions and taxes were levied without difficulty throughout the whole remainder of the campaign. General Merle, continuing his success, marched northward against the province of Santander in Asturias, forced the rugged passes of Lantuerio and Venta d'Escudo, and descending the northern side of the ridge of Santander, in concert with a portion of the reserve which the Emperor despatched to his assistance, made himself master of that town, and forced the intrepid bishop, with his warlike followers, to take refuge in the inaccessible fastnesses of the neighbouring mountains.²

3.
Which had
the effect of
entirely sub-
duing that
part of the
country.

June 23.

² Napier, i.
62, 64. Tor.
i. 300, 307.
Foy, iii.
269, 285.

While Leon and Castile were the theatres of these early and important successes, the province of Aragon, though almost entirely destitute of regular forces, was successful, after sustaining several bloody reverses, in maintaining a more prolonged resistance to the enemy. By indefatigable exertions, Palafox and the energetic junta of Saragossa had succeeded in arming and communicating the rudiments of discipline to a tumultuary assembly of ten thousand infantry and two hundred horse,

4.
Operations
in Aragon.
First siege
of Sara-
gossa.

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1808.

June 12.

June 13.

June 14.

with which, and eight pieces of artillery, his brother, the Marquis Lazan, ventured to march out of the city and await Lefebvre-Desnouettes in a favourable position behind the Huecha. But though the French were not more than half the number of the enemy, they were, from the want of discipline in their opponents, and their own great superiority in cavalry, much more than a match for them. The peasants withstood, without flinching, several attacks in front; but a vigorous assault in flank threw them into disorder, and a gallant charge by the Polish lancers completed their rout. Notwithstanding this defeat, the Aragonese who had escaped, having received reinforcements, again stood firm on the following day at Gallur, still nearer Saragossa, and were again overthrown. Upon this, Palafox himself marched out of the capital, at the head of five thousand undisciplined burghers and peasants, and moved to reinforce the wreck of the former army at Alagon—an advantageous position, four leagues from the capital of the province, on the banks of the Xalon, near its confluence with the Ebro, where the whole took post. But the undisciplined crowd, discouraged by the preceding defeats, was now in no condition to make head against the French legions. The burghers, at the first sight of the enemy, broke and fled; and though Palafox, with a few pieces of artillery, and three companies of regular troops, contrived for long to defend the entrance of the town, they too were at last compelled to yield, and retire in disorder into SARAGOSSA; and the French troops appeared before the heroic city.¹

¹ Foy, iii.
291, 292.
Tor. i. 307,
308. South.
i. 457.

5.
Description
of Sara-
gossa.

Atlas,
Plate 49.

Saragossa, which has now, like Numantia and Saguntum, become immortal in the rolls of fame, is situated on the right bank of the Ebro, in the midst of a fertile plain, abounding in olive groves, vineyards, gardens, and all the marks of long-continued civilisation. It contained at that period fifty thousand inhabitants, though the sword and pestilence consequent on the two memorable sieges which it underwent, have since considerably reduced its

numbers. The immediate vicinity is flat, and in some places marshy; on the southern or right bank of the river it is bounded by the little course of the Huerba, the bed of which has been converted into a canal; while on the northern, the clearer stream of the Gallego, descending from the Pyrenean summits, falls at right angles into the Ebro. On the southern side, and at the distance of a quarter of a league, rises Monte Torrero, on the side of which is conducted the canal of Aragon—a noble work, commenced by the Emperor Charles V., forming a water communication without a single lock from Tudela to Saragossa. This hill commands all the plain on the right bank, and overlooks the town. Several warehouses and edifices, constructed for the commerce of the canal, were intrenched and occupied by twelve hundred men. The city itself, surrounded by a low brick wall, not above ten or twelve feet in height, and three in thickness, interrupted in many places by houses and convents which were built in its line, and pierced by eight gates, with no outworks, could scarcely be said to be fortified. Very few guns were on the ramparts in a state for service; but the houses were strongly built, partly of stone, partly of brick, and in general two stories in height, with each flat vaulted in the roof, so as to render them nearly proof against fire; while the massy piles of the convents, rising like castles in many quarters, afforded strong positions, if the walls were forced, to a desperate and inflamed population. Few regular generals would have thought of making a stand in such a city; but Florus has recorded that Numantia had neither walls nor towers when it resisted so long and heroically the Roman legions; and Colmenar had said, nearly a century before, with a prophetic spirit, “Saragossa is without defences; but the valour of its inhabitants supplies the want of ramparts.”¹

¹ Tor. ii. l. 4.
Foy, iii. 293,
294. Nap.
i. 65, 66.
Cavallero,
Siège de
Saragossa,
29, 33.

The resolution to defend Saragossa cannot with justice be ascribed to any single individual, as the glory belongs to the whole population, all of whom, in the first move-

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1808.

6.

General
concurrence
of all classes
in the de-
fence.

June 15.

ments of confusion and excitement, had a share in the generous resolution. When Palafox retired after his repeated defeats into the town, he either despaired of being able to defend it, or deemed it necessary to collect reinforcements for a prolonged resistance from other quarters, and accordingly set out with a small body of regular troops for the northern bank of the river, leaving the armed population nearly unsupported to defend the walls. This measure was well adapted to increase the ultimate means of resistance which might be brought to bear upon the invader, if the town, when left to its own resources, could make head against the enemy; but it exposed it to imminent hazard of being taken, if, in the first moments of alarm consequent on the removal of the captain-general and regular forces, the besiegers should vigorously prosecute their operations. On the day after his arrival before the city, Lefebvre-Desnouettes presented himself in force before the gates, and commenced an immediate assault. But the people, though without leaders, with surprising energy prepared to repulse it. In the first moment of assault, indeed, a column of the enemy penetrated to the street Santa Engracia; the citizens, though violently excited, were without leaders or concert, and a few additional battalions would have made the enemy masters of Saragossa. But at this critical moment a desultory fire from some peasants and disbanded soldiers arrested the advance of the French, and the inhabitants, regaining hope from the hesitation of the assailants, exerted themselves with such vigour that the enemy again retired beyond the gates. Instantly the whole population were in activity: men, women, and children flew to the ramparts; cannons were dragged to the gates; loopholes struck out in the walls; fascines and gabions constructed with astonishing celerity, and in less than twenty-four hours the city was secure from a *coup-de-main*.¹

June 16.

¹ Cavallero, 46, 47. Tor. i. 6, 7. Napier, ii. 66, 67.

The loss sustained by Lefebvre-Desnouettes in this

unsuccessful assault was very severe, and sufficient to convince him that operations in form would be requisite before the town could be reduced. He withdrew to a little distance, therefore, from the walls, and sent for heavy artillery from Pampeluna and Bayonne, with a view to the commencement of a regular siege. Meanwhile Palafox, who had issued into the plain on the left bank of the Ebro, moved to Pina, where he crossed the river and advanced to Belchite, and there joined the Baron Versage, who had assembled four thousand new levies. Uniting everywhere the volunteers whom he found in the villages, he at length gained, by a circuitous route, the river Xalon, in the rear of the French army, with seven thousand infantry, a hundred horse, and four pieces of cannon. Some of his officers, seeing so respectable a force collected together, deemed it imprudent to hazard it by attempting the relief of Saragossa, and proposed that they should retire to Valencia. Palafox assembled the troops the moment that he heard of this proposal, and, after describing in energetic colours the glorious task which awaited them of delivering their country, offered to give passports to all those who wished to leave the army. Such was the ascendancy of his intrepid spirit that not one person left the ranks.* Taking advantage of the enthusiasm excited by this unanimous determination,

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1808.

7.

Operations
of Palafox
to relieve
the city.
He is de-
feated and
re-enters it.

June 23.

* Colonel Napier, who is seldom favourable to aristocratic leaders, says, that "Palafox, ignorant of war, and probably owed by Tío Jorge, (an urban chief of humble origin,) expressed his determination to fight," but he "did not display that firmness in danger which his speech promised, as he *must have fled early* and reached Calatayud in the night, though many of the troops arrived there *unbroken* next morning." Neither the words in italics, nor any corresponding words, are to be found in Cavallero, whom he refers to as his authority, nor in any Spanish historian with whom I am acquainted. Toreno, though an avowed liberal, after recounting Palafox's speech on this occasion, says, "Such is the power which the inflexible resolution of a chief exercises in critical circumstances." There is not the least reason to suspect the distinguished English author of intentional misrepresentation, but the insinuations here made are fatal to the character of Palafox; and as there is no ground for them, at least in the author quoted by him, it is desirable that the authorities on which they are made should be given in the next edition of that able work.—See CAVALLERO, *Siège de Saragosse*, 49; TORENO, ii. 11; and NAPIER, i. 67.

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the Spanish general led them against the enemy, but before they could reach him night had fallen. They took up their quarters accordingly at Epila, where they were unexpectedly assailed, after dark, by Lefebvre-Desnouettes with five thousand men. The Spanish levies, surprised and unable to form their ranks during the confusion of a nocturnal combat, were easily dispersed: although a few fought with such obstinacy that they only retired to Calatayud the following morning. Despairing, from the issue of this conflict, of being able to keep the field, Palafox became sensible that Saragossa must be defended within its own walls, and, making a long circuit, he at length re-entered the city on the 2d July.¹

July 2.
1 Tor. i. 11,
12. Cav. 49,
50. Nap. i.
67, 68.

8.
First opera-
tions of the
siege.

Meanwhile the besieging force, having received heavy artillery and stores from Bayonne and Pampeluna, were vigorously prosecuting their operations, which were in the first instance chiefly directed against Monte Torrero, on the right bank of the river. Destitute at this critical moment of any noble leaders, the people of Saragossa did not sink under their difficulties. Calvo de Rozas, to whom the command had been devolved in his absence by Palafox, was a man whose calm resolution was equal to the emergency; and he was energetically supported by a plebeian chief, Tio Martin, to whom, with Tio Jorge, of similar rank, the real glory of resolving on defence, in circumstances all but desperate, is due. Encouraged by the intrepid conduct of their chiefs, the people assembled in the public square, and with the magistrates, officers, and troops of the garrison, voluntarily took an oath "to shed the last drop of their blood for the defence of their religion, their king, and their hearths." They had need of all their resolution, for the means of attack against them were multiplying in a fearful degree. Verdier, whose talents had been fatally felt by the Prussians and Russians in the Polish campaign, was appointed to the command of the siege; the troops under his command were strongly reinforced, and Lefebvre-

June 25.

Desnouettes was detached to act under the orders of Bessières against the insurgents in Leon. At the end of June, the besieging force being augmented to twelve thousand men, and the battering train having arrived, an attack was made on the convent of St Joseph, situated outside of the walls, which at first failed, though the besieged had no other defence than loopholes struck out in the rampart. But being resumed with greater force, the defences were carried, and the brave garrison, after obstinately contesting the possession of the church, refectory, and cells, set fire to the edifice, and retreated to the city. Monte Torrero was the next object of attack, while a tremendous fire, kept up with uncommon vigour on other parts of the town, diverted the attention of the besieged from the quarter where the real assault was to be made. The commander, despairing of success with the undisciplined crowd under his command, and not aware of the difference between fighting with such troops behind walls and in the open field, evacuated that important post; for which, though it was perhaps inevitable, he was remitted to a council of war, condemned and executed.¹

Having gained this vantage-ground, Verdier commenced a vigorous bombardment of the city, and battered its feeble walls furiously from the advantageous position which had so unexpectedly fallen into his power. Amidst the terror and confusion thus excited, repeated attacks were made on the gates of El Carmen and Portillo; but such was the ardour and tenacity of the defence, and the severity of the fire kept up from the windows, walls, and roofs of the houses, that he was on every occasion, after desperate struggles, repulsed with severe loss. These repeated failures convinced Verdier of the necessity of making approaches in form, and completing the investment of the city, which still received constant supplies of men and provisions from the surrounding country. With this view he threw a bridge of boats over the Ebro, and

CHAP.
LIV.1808.
June 26.

June 27.

¹ Nap. i. 67,
68. Cav. 52,
53. Tor. i.
15, 16.9.
Progress
of the be-
siegiers.

CHAP. having thus opened a communication with the left bank,
 LIV. the communication of the besieged with the country,
 1808. though not entirely cut off, was, after hard fighting, for
 July 10. many days restrained within very narrow limits. Before
 this could be effected, however, the patriots received a
 July 17. reinforcement from the regiment of Estremadura, eight
 hundred strong, with the aid of which they made a
 desperate sally with two thousand men to retake the
 Monte Torrero. But though the assailants fought with
 the utmost vehemence, they were unable to prevail
 against the disciplined valour of the French, and were
 repulsed with very heavy loss, including that of the com-
 mander. After this disaster they were necessarily con-
 fined to their walls; and the French approaches having
 Aug. 3. been at length completed, the breaching batteries opened
 against the quarters of Santa Engracia and Aljafria, and
 a terrible bombardment having at the same time been kept
 up, a powder-magazine blew up with fearful devastation
 in the public walk of the Cosso. The slender wall being
 soon laid in ruins, the town was summoned to surrender;
 but Palafox having rejected the offer, preparations were
 made for an assault.¹

¹ Cav. 51,
 55. Tor.
 ii. 21, 25.
 Foy, iii. 298,
 300. Nap.
 i. 68, 69.

10.
 Desperate
 assault of
 the town.

The storm took place on the 4th August. Palafox at
 an early hour stationed himself on the breach, and even
 when the forlorn hope was approaching, refused all terms
 of capitulation. The combat at the ruined rampart was
 long and bloody; but after a violent struggle, the French
 penetrated into the town, and made themselves masters
 of the street of Santa Engracia. Deeming themselves
 now in possession of Saragossa, their numerous battalions
 poured through the deserted breach, overspread the
 ramparts on either side, while a close column pushed
 on, with fixed bayonets and loud cheers, from Santa
 Engracia to the Cosso. But a desperate resistance
 there awaited them. Despite all the efforts of the
 citizens, they penetrated into the centre of the street,
 planted the tricolor flag on the church of the Cross near

its middle, and pierced into the convent of St Francisco on its left, and the lunatic asylum on its right, whence the insane inmates, taking advantage of the confusion, issued forth, and mingled, with frightful cries, shouts, and grimaces, among the combatants. To add to the consternation, another powder-magazine blew up in the thickest of the fight, and the burning fragments, falling in all directions, set the city on fire in many different quarters. But notwithstanding all these horrors, the Spaniards maintained the conflict. An incessant fire issued from the windows and roofs of the houses ; several detached bodies of the enemy, which penetrated into the adjoining streets, were repulsed ; a column got entangled in a long crooked street, the Arco de Cineja, and was driven back into the Cosso with great slaughter ; Palafox, Calvo, Tio Jorge, and Tio Martin, vied with each other in heroism ; and when night separated the combatants, the French were in possession of one side of the Cosso and the citizens of the other.¹

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LIV.

1808.

¹Cav. 56, 59.
Tor. ii. 25,
29. Nap. i.
70.

The successful resistance thus made to the enemy after they had penetrated into the city, and the defences of the place, in a military point of view, had been overcome, showed the Saragossans with what prospects they might maintain the conflict even from house to house. But their gallant leader was not without apprehensions that their ammunition might fail, or the defenders be ruinously reduced during so prolonged a struggle ; and therefore, no sooner had the first triumph of the enemy been arrested, than he hastened out of the town to accelerate the arrival of the reinforcements which he knew were approaching, and exerted himself with so much vigour during the succeeding days, that on the morning of the 8th he succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the besiegers, and re-entered the city at the head of three thousand men, and a large convoy of ammunition and provisions. It may easily be imagined with what transports they were received, for, in the interim, the citizens had had a

11.
Continued
contest in
the streets.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Cav. 58,
62. Tor. ii.
28, 30. Foy,
ii. 320.

12.
The Span-
iards gradu-
ally regain
the ascen-
dant.

desperate conflict to maintain, from which they never enjoyed one moment's respite. From street to street, from house to house, from room to room, the fight was kept up with incredible obstinacy on both sides. Every post became the theatre of bloody strife, to which company after company, column after column, regiment after regiment, were successively brought up; while the fire of musketry, the roar of artillery, the flight of bombs, the glare of conflagration, and the cries of the combatants, continued without intermission night and day.¹

But all the efforts of the besiegers were in vain. Animated almost to frenzy by the long duration and heart-stirring interest of the conflict, all classes of the besieged vied with each other in heroic constancy. The priests were to be seen at the posts of danger, encouraging the soldiers, and administering consolation to the wounded and the dying; the women and children carried water incessantly to the quarters on fire, attended the wounded, interred the dead. Many even forgot the timidity of their sex, and took the places of their slain husbands or brothers at the cannon's side. The citizens relieved each other night and day in the mortal and perpetual struggle with the enemy. Such was the vigour of the resistance, that, from the 4th to the 14th August, the besiegers made themselves masters only of four houses; one in front of the Treasury was only won after an incessant combat of six days' duration. After the arrival of the reinforcements under Palafox, the conflict was no longer equal. Symptoms of discouragement were manifest in the enemy; sinister rumours circulated on both sides, of a great disaster in the south; and the French were gradually losing ground, even in those quarters of which they had obtained possession during the first burst of the assault. Still the fire of artillery continued, and was particularly violent during the night of the 14th August; but at daybreak on the following morning it suddenly ceased, and the besieged, when the sun rose, beheld with

astonishment the enemy at some distance, in full retreat, traversing the plain towards Pampeluna. The victory was complete : the heavy cannon and siege stores were all abandoned or thrown into the canal : and the inhabitants, with enthusiastic shouts of transport, concluded, amidst cries of "Long live Our Lady of the Pillar!" the ceremony of the *fête Dieu*, which had been interrupted by the commencement of the siege on the 16th June.¹

In truth, while this sanguinary conflict was raging in Saragossa, disasters of the most serious nature had been experienced by the French in the south and east of Spain. Moncey, who had set out from Madrid early in June, with eight thousand men, to suppress the insurrection in Valencia and cut off the communication between that city and Saragossa, reached Cuença on the 11th, where he remained inactive for several days. Resuming at length his march on the 16th, he advanced by Pesquiera towards Valencia : but as he penetrated farther into the country, the universal desertion of the towns and villages, and evident traces of armed men on his line of march, gave gloomy presages of an approaching storm. In the first instance, however, these indications proved fallacious. Some Swiss companies, with a body of armed peasants and four pieces of cannon, had, indeed, taken post to defend the strong and important pass of the bridge of Pajazo, on the river Cabriel ; but the new levies dispersed on the first appearance of the enemy, and the greater part of the Swiss troops joined the invaders ; so that the bridge was gained without any difficulty. Encouraged by this success, Moncey wrote to General Chabran, who was ordered to co-operate with him from the side of Catalonia, appointing a rendezvous on the 28th, under the walls of Valencia ; and, advancing forward, approached the rocky ridge of calcareous mountains called the Cabrillas, which forms the western boundary of the kingdom of Valencia, and the original sea-wall, built by nature, of the lofty plateau of Castile against the waves of the Mediterranean

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Cav. 59,
63. Tor. ii.
28, 32. Foy,
ii. 321, 331.
South. ii.
25, 31.

13.
Operations
of Moncey
in Valencia.
June 5.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

June 21.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

June 24.

Sea. A single road traversed, by a rapid and laborious ascent, this rugged barrier ; and as the adjoining heights were impassable for cavalry, a more advantageous position for resisting the enemy could not have been desired. The summits of the rocks which bordered the defile on either side were covered with armed peasants, to the number of six thousand ; and four pieces of artillery, supported by a regiment of regular troops, and a troop of horse, guarded the main road. All these obstacles, however, were speedily overcome. While the cavalry and artillery engaged the attention of the enemy in front, General Harispe turned their flank, and by a rapid attack over almost inaccessible rocks, threw them into confusion, dispersed the new levies, and captured all the ammunition, baggage, and artillery. Nothing now remained to retard the advance of the invaders ; the summit of the ridge was soon gained, from which the French soldiers, wearied with the arid mountains and waterless plains of Castile, beheld, with the delight of the Israelites of old, the green plains and irrigated meadows and level richness of the promised land, and three days afterwards they appeared before the walls of Valencia.¹

¹ Nap. i. 92,
93. Tor. i.
326, 329.
Foy, iii.
250, 253.

14.
Description
of Valencia,
and prepara-
tions for its
defence.

Situated on the right of the Guadalaviar or Turia, and in the vicinity of the sea, Valencia is one of the most delightful cities which is to be found in Europe. It contains eighty thousand inhabitants ; but of that number more than one-half inhabit the enchanting suburban villas which lie without the walls. These walls consist of an old rampart of unhewn stones, rudely put together, including within their circuit a decayed citadel. In a military point of view, therefore, it could hardly be regarded as a place of defence ; but the spirit and circumstances of the inhabitants rendered the slightest rampart a tower of strength. The enthusiasm of the people ran high ; their hatred of the invaders was inextinguishable ; and the crimes they had committed were too serious to give them any rational hope of safety but in the most

determined resistance. It is a melancholy but certain fact, that in revolutionary movements, as in all others where passion is the prime mover, the most enduring and often successful efforts result from the consciousness of such enormities as leave no hope but in obstinate hostility —“*una spes victis, nullam sperare salutem.*” The junta had ably and energetically directed the public activity; engineers had marked out intrenchments and planted batteries to protect the principal gates of the city; a fortified camp had been constructed at a league from the walls; and the inhabitants, without distinction of age, rank, or sex, had laboured night and day, for several weeks past, to complete the works on which their common safety depended. Within the gates, preparations had been made for the most vigorous resistance; trenches had been cut, and barriers constructed across the principal streets; chariots and carts overturned, so as to impede the advance of the assailants; the windows were filled with mattresses, and the doors barricaded; while a plentiful array of fire-arms, stones, and boiling oil, was prepared on the flat tops of the houses to rain down death on the enemy.¹

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LIV.

1808.

¹ Tor. 329,
330. Foy,
iii. 253, 255.
Nap. i. 93.

The wreck of the troops and armed peasants who had combated at the Cabrillas, took refuge in the intrenched camp at Cuarte without the walls, where they occupied in force the sides of the canal which unites the waters of the Guadalaviar to those of the Fera. In that position they were attacked early on the morning of the 27th, and, after three hours' firing, driven back to the batteries and intrenchments in front of the gates. There, however, a more determined stand was made: and Moncey, desirous of bringing up his whole forces and artillery, deferred the attack on the city itself till the following day. Hardly an eye was closed in Valencia during the succeeding night. All ranks, and both sexes, laboured incessantly to complete the preparations for defence; and so great was the universal activity, that when the rays of the morning sun appeared above the blue expanse of the

15.
Attack on
the city.
Its repulse.

June 27.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.
June 28.

Mediterranean, it was hardly possible for the assailants to hope for success except from the pusillanimity of the defenders. Moncey disposed his field-pieces in the most favourable situations to reply to the heavy artillery on the ramparts and outworks, and, having driven the enemy through the suburbs, commenced the assault. Such, however, was the vigour of the defence, that very little advantage was gained. The light artillery of the French was soon overpowered by the heavy cannon on the walls; a murderous fire of grape was kept up from the top of the rampart and the intrenchments round the entrance of the city; while the new levies, wholly unable to withstand the shock of their veteran opponents in the open field, contended on terms of comparative equality in the houses and behind the walls or enclosures adjoining the gates. The enthusiasm within increased as the fire approached their dwellings: the priests traversed the streets with the cross in their hands, exhorting the people to continue the contest; the women brought up ammunition to the combatants; and when the grapeshot began to fail, the ladies of rank instantly furnished an ample supply of missiles to charge the guns. A city so defended was beyond the reach of a *coup-de-main*: the French troops rapidly melted away under the dropping fire with which they were assailed from many different quarters; and in the evening Moncey drew off to Cuarte, having lost two thousand men in this fruitless attack.¹

¹ Tor. i. 333,
336. Nap. i.
94, 95. Foy,
iii. 254, 259.

16.
Progress of
the insurrec-
tion, and
partial suc-
cesses of the
patriots in
that quarter.

The spirit of the Valencians was roused to the very highest pitch by this glorious result; and in the first burst of their triumph they confidently expected that the Conde Cervellon, who commanded a corps six thousand strong, consisting chiefly of armed peasants, on the banks of the Xucar, would fall upon the enemy in his retreat, and complete his destruction. But it is a very different thing for insurgents to repulse an assailant from behind walls, and to defeat him in the open field. While these flattering illusions were filling the city with transport,

Cervellon himself narrowly escaped destruction. Attacked by Moncey in his retreat, he was surprised with one-half of his corps on one side of the river, and the remainder on the other. The part first assailed made a feeble resistance: in the confusion of the rout, the French made themselves masters of a bridge, and, rapidly passing over, soon completed the defeat of the portion on the other side. Two days after, three thousand, who had escaped from the first disaster, were attacked and dispersed, with the loss of all their artillery, near Almanza, the celebrated theatre of the victory of the French over the allies in the War of the Succession. But these advantages, though considerable, gained by a retreating army in the course of its flight, were no counterpoise to the disaster experienced before Valencia. The whole province was up in arms at the glorious tidings; the communication both with Catalonia and Madrid was cut off; Cuença was besieged by a body of seven thousand peasants, who overpowered the detachment left in that town; and though the victors were themselves assailed two days after, and dispersed with great slaughter, by Caulaincourt, whom Savary despatched from Madrid with a powerful body of horse to restore the communication with Moncey in that quarter, yet the object of the advance towards Valencia was totally lost. The French general, finding that Frère, with his division, on whose aid he had calculated in a renewed attack which he was preparing against that city, had been recalled to Madrid by orders of Savary, who was alarmed at the advance of Cuesta and Blake towards the Guadarrama pass, gave up the expedition in despair, and returned by Ocana to the capital.¹

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

July 1.

July 3.

July 1.

July 3.

¹ Nap. i. 97,
98. Tor. ii.
336, 343.
Foy, iii. 260,
262, and iv.
40, 44.

The ultimate failure of the expedition of Moncey towards Valencia was occasioned by the terror excited in the capital by the threatening advance of Cuesta and Blake, with their united forces, upon the French line of communication between Madrid and the Bayonne frontier. There, it was evident, was the vital point of the

17.

Advance of
Cuesta in
Leon on the
French com-
munica-
tions.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

contest; there a disaster would instantly be attended with fatal consequences. Secured in that quarter, the failure of less considerable expeditions emanating from the capital was of comparatively little importance. Napoleon, who was strongly impressed with these views, had used the utmost efforts to reinforce Bessières, to whom the defence of the line through Old Castile was intrusted; and after providing for the occupation of the various points in which he had so early and successfully suppressed the insurrection, he could concentrate twenty thousand men to act against the enemy, who were approaching from the Galician mountains. But meantime the enemy had not been idle. Filanghieri, captain-general of Galicia, had, with the aid of the bountiful supplies of England, succeeded in organising twenty-five thousand men—including the soldiers who had come to Corunna from Oporto, originally part of Junot's expedition, and the garrisons of that place and Ferrol—and, with a considerable train of artillery, had taken post in the mountains ten miles in the rear of Astorga. The situation of this corps, threatening the line of communication between Bayonne and Madrid, was such as to excite the utmost disquietude in the breast of Napoleon; and he sedulously impressed upon Savary that it was there that the decisive blow was to be struck.^{1*}

¹ Sav. iii.
248, 250.
Tor. ii. 341.
Nap. i. 101.

18.
Operations
of Bessières
against
Blake and
Cuesta in
Leon.
June 28.

That general, however, was not so well aware as his imperial master where the vital point was to be found; and, instead of reinforcing Bessières with all his disposable forces, he despatched Frère with his division on the track of Moncey, to endeavour to reopen the communication with that marshal, which the intervening insur-

* "A stroke delivered by Bessières," said he, "would paralyse all Spain. What signifies now Valencia and Andalusia? The only way really to strengthen Dupont is to reinforce Bessières. There is not a citizen of Madrid, not a peasant in the remotest valleys of Spain, who does not feel that the fate of the campaign is exclusively in the hands of Marshal Bessières. What a misfortune, then, that in so important an affair we should lose a chance, how inconsiderable soever, of success."—*NAPOLEON to SAVARY, July 13, 1808; Foy, iv. 45, 46; and NAPIER, i. Appendix, No. 1.*

rection had entirely cut off; and sent on Vedel and Gobert, with their respective divisions, to reinforce Dupont, who had by this time crossed the Sierra Morena, and was far advanced in his progress through Andalusia. Impressed, in a short time afterwards, with the increasing danger to his communications which arose from the junction of the Galician army near Astorga with that which still kept its ground in Leon under Cuesta, he hastily countermanded these orders; recalled Frère to Madrid; ordered Vedel, Gobert, and even Dupont himself, to remeasure their steps, and held himself in readiness to march from the capital with all the disposable troops he could collect, to reinforce Bessières on the line of the great northern communication. These dispositions, as usual with alterations made in general designs on the spur of the moment, and in presence of the enemy, were essentially erroneous. The decisive point should have been looked to at first; the subsequent vacillation was too late to strengthen Bessières, but was calculated essentially to weaken Dupont, whom it went to deprive, in circumstances of imminent danger, of one of his best divisions. As such, they excited the greatest displeasure in Napoleon, who gave vent to it in an able and acrimonious despatch, (which throws great light on the state of the campaign at this period,) and never afterwards in military transactions intrusted Savary with any important command.¹* But meanwhile the danger had blown over in the north. Bessières, though unsupported, had not only made head

¹ Sav. iii.
248, 252.
Tor. ii. 344,
345. Foy,
iv. 40, 47.
Nap. i. 101,
102.

* "The French affairs in Spain," said Napoleon, "would be in an excellent state if Gobert's division had marched upon Valladolid to support Bessières, and Frère's division had occupied San Clemente, alike ready to reinforce Moncey or Dupont, as circumstances might require. Instead of this, Gobert having been directed upon Dupont, and Frère being with Moncey, harassed and weakened by marches and counter-marches, our situation has been sensibly injured. It is a great mistake not to have occupied the citadel of Segovia; of all positions in that quarter it is the most dangerous to the French army, as, situated between two roads, it intercepts both communications. *If Dupont should experience a check, it is of no consequence; the only effect of it would be to leave him to repass the mountains; but a stroke delivered to Marshal Bessières would tell on the heart of the army, would give it a locked jaw, and speedily be felt in all*

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

19.
Movements
on both sides
preparatory
to a battle.

against Cuesta and Blake, but defeated them; and a great victory in the plains of Leon had opened to Joseph the gates of Madrid.

Blake, with the army of Galicia, having effected a junction with the remains of Cuesta's troops which had escaped the rout of Palencia, their united forces left a division at Benavente to protect their stores, and advanced into the plains of Leon to give battle to Bessières. This plan could not but appear rash, considering the veteran character of the French troops, their superiority in cavalry, and the undisciplined crowd of which a large part of the Spanish levies was composed. It was undertaken solely on the responsibility of Cuesta, who had assumed the chief command, and against the strongest remonstrances of Blake, who urged that, by falling back to the frontiers of Galicia, where the French general could never pretend to follow them, they would gain time to discipline and equip their troops, and would soon be enabled to advance again at the head of forty thousand effective men. This sage counsel was rejected. Cuesta, who was a brave but inexperienced veteran, equally headstrong and obstinate, insisted upon an immediate action; and finding that Blake still declined to obey, he addressed himself to the junta of Galicia, who, yielding to popular clamour, seconded his orders, and directed Blake forthwith to advance and give battle. Having now no alternative but submission, Blake did the utmost in his power, during the short interval which remained, to put his troops into good condition;

its extremities. It is on this account that it is so unfortunate that the prescribed orders have not been specifically obeyed. The army of Bessières should have had at least eight thousand men more than it has, in order to remove all chance of a disaster in that quarter. The affair of Valencia was a matter of no importance; Moncey alone was adequate to it, it was absurd to think of reinforcing him. If he could not take that town with the forces he had, he could not have done so with twenty thousand more; in that case it would become an affair of artillery. You cannot take by a single stroke a town with eighty thousand or a hundred thousand inhabitants, who have barricaded the streets and fortified the houses. Frère, therefore, could have added nothing to the means of Moncey against Valencia, while the abstraction of his division seriously weakened Dupont. Moreover, if the latter general was to be succoured, it would

and on the 13th July, Cuesta moved forward with the united forces, amounting to twenty-five thousand infantry, four hundred cavalry, and thirty pieces of cannon, to RIO-SECO. Bessières' force was much less numerous, amounting only to fifteen thousand men, and twenty-five guns: but of these nearly two thousand were admirable horsemen, and the composition of the whole was such as more than to counterbalance the inferiority in point of numbers.¹

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.
July 13.

¹ Nap. i. 106.
Tor. ii. 347,
348. Foy,
iii. 302,
308.

The dispositions of Cuesta for the battle were as faulty as the resolution to hazard it was ill advised. Contrary alike to the rules of the military art, and the dictates of common sense on the subject, he drew up his troops in two lines at the distance of *a mile and a half from each other*. The first, ten thousand strong, under Blake, with fifteen pieces of cannon, but in great part composed of raw levies, was stationed on a plateau in advance, of rugged and difficult access; the second, fifteen hundred toises (nine thousand feet) in the rear, led by Cuesta in person, consisted of fifteen thousand men, almost all regular soldiers, and fifteen guns. The few cavalry they had were with the first line. Bessières, perceiving at once the advantage which this extraordinary disposition offered to an enterprising attack, prepared to avail himself to the utmost of it, by throwing the bulk of his forces into the wide chasm between the two lines, so as to overwhelm the first before the second could come up to its assistance. Penetrating rapidly into the open space between the two

20.
Battle of
Rio Seco.
July 14.

Atlas,
Plate 50.

have been better to have sent him a single regiment direct, than three by so circuitous a route as that by which Frère was ordered to march. In civil wars it is the important points which must be defended, and no attempt should be made to go everywhere. The grand object of all the armies should be to preserve Madrid; it is there that everything is to be lost or won. Madrid cannot be seriously menaced except by the army of Galicia: but it may be so there; for Bessières has not adequate forces to insure its defeat. It may be threatened by the army of Andalusia, but hardly endangered; for in proportion as Dupont falls back, he is reinforced, and with their twenty thousand men he and Vedel should at least be able to keep the enemy in check in that quarter."—*Notes addressed to SAVARY on the affairs of Spain by NAPOLEON, 13th July 1808; taken at the battle of Vitoria in King JOSEPH'S Portfolio; NAPIER, i. Appendix, No. 1.*

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LIV.

1808.

parts of the army, he attacked Blake both in flank and rear with such vigour, that in an instant his lines were broken, his artillery taken, his men dispersed. As soon as he saw the rout of his first line, Cuesta moved forward with the second to the attack, and succeeded in reaching the enemy before the disorder consequent on their rapid success and pursuit had been repaired. The consequences had wellnigh proved fatal to the victors. Cuesta's right wing, advancing swiftly and steadily forward in good order, overthrew several French battalions which had not fully recovered their ranks, and captured four guns.¹

¹ Foy, iii.
310, 313.
Tor. ii. 352.
Nap. i. 107.

21.
Defeat of the
Spaniards.

This disaster, like that experienced by Zach's grenadiers at Marengo, might, with a less skilful commander or less steady troops, have turned the fortune of the day; for the example of disorder is contagious, and the confusion was already spreading into the French centre, when Bessières, with the cavalry of the Imperial Guard, twelve hundred strong, charged Cuesta's right, which had become exposed by the rapidity of its advance, in flank, with great vigour; and Merle's division, returning from the pursuit of Blake, renewed the combat in front. A short but sanguinary struggle ensued. The Spanish infantry fought bravely, and for a few minutes the fate of the battle was undecided; but at length they were broken, and the loud shouts of victory, which had been raised in the Castilian ranks, passed to the French side. After this it was no longer a battle, but a massacre and rout; the Spaniards broke and dispersed on all sides, leaving eighteen guns, and their whole ammunition, besides two thousand prisoners, in the hands of the enemy. Three thousand had fallen on the field, while the loss of the victors did not exceed twelve hundred men. The town of Rio-Seco, taken in the pursuit, was sacked and plundered with merciless severity, and all the nuns in the convents were subjected to the brutal violence of the soldiery. Few days have been more disastrous to Spain; for, worse than the loss of artillery and prisoners, it destroyed all confidence

in the ability of their troops to withstand the enemy in the field ; while to Napoleon it was the source of unbounded, and, as it turned out, premature exultation. "It is Villa Viciosa," he exclaimed, when the joyful intelligence arrived at Bayonne ; "Bessières has placed Joseph on the throne of Spain."* Deeming the war over, he left that fortress, and pursued his journey by Bordeaux for the French capital : while Joseph, relieved now of all anxiety in regard to his communications, pursued his journey to Madrid, where he arrived, as already mentioned, on the 21st July.¹

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

¹ South. i.
480, 481.
Foy, iii. 310,
313. Tor. ii.
352, 354.
Nap. i. 107.

Napoleon was premature in this judgment : Rio-Seco placed Joseph on the throne of Madrid ; but it neither finished the war nor maintained him there. The emperor did not, however, suspend his military preparations : nine thousand Poles, who had entered the service of France, were directed, with four regiments of infantry and two of cavalry, from the Grand Army in Germany, towards the Pyrenees. All the princes of the Rhenish Confederacy received orders to send a regiment each in the same direction : the Guards of Joseph followed him to Spain from Naples. Tuscany and the kingdom of Italy were commanded to send their contingents to reinforce Duhesme in Catalonia. Reinforcements to the amount of forty thousand men were thus provided, which all arrived in Spain during the three following months, but too late to arrest the progress of misfortune. While both the French Emperor and his royal brother were indulging in the sanguine hope that all was terminated, a dreadful disaster had occurred in Andalusia,² and a blow been

22.
Further pre-
parations of
Napoleon
for the war.

² Foy, iv.
48, 49.

* In allusion to the battle at Villa Viciosa, where Philip V. and the Duke de Vendôme gained a complete victory over the Allies, which decided the Succession War in favour of the house of Bourbon. But the comparison was the reverse of the truth ; for at Villa Viciosa, Philip and the Spaniards combated for Spain against foreign armies ; and the affair was decisive, for the whole military force of both sides was collected in one field ; whereas at Rio-Seco the general of an intrusive king sought to beat down the native troops of Castile, and a fragment only of the military strength of either side was engaged.—See Foy, iv. 47.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

23.

March of
Dupont into
Andalusia.Atlas,
Plate 48.

struck on the banks of the Guadalquivir which resounded from one end of Europe to the other.

Dupont, who was at Toledo when the insurrection broke out in all parts of Spain, received, on the 24th May, an order from Murat, then lieutenant-general of Spain, to move upon Cadiz, by the route of the Sierra Morena, Cordova, and Seville. He was to be joined in Andalusia by four thousand men and ten guns drawn from the army of Portugal. Having immediately set out, he experienced no resistance while traversing the open plains of la Mancha; and in the Sierra Morena found the villages indeed deserted, but no enemy to dispute his progress. At Andujar, however, where he arrived on the 2d June, he received information of the real state of matters in that province—that Seville, Cadiz, and all the principal towns were ruled by juntas, which had declared war against France; that the army at St Roque had joined the patriot cause, and that the peasants by thousands were flocking into the burghs to enrol themselves under the national banners. Alarmed by this intelligence, Dupont wrote to Madrid for reinforcements; and, after establishing an hospital at Andujar and taking measures of precaution to secure his rear, set out four days afterwards, and continued his march towards Cordova, still following the left bank of the Guadalquivir. This road, however, after running eight-and-twenty leagues on that bank of the river, crosses it at Alcolea by a long bridge of nineteen arches, strongly constructed of black marble. It was at its extremity that the Spaniards awaited the enemy.¹

June 7.
¹ Tor. i. 320.
Foy, iii. 224,
227. Nap. i.
112.

24.

Capture of
the bridge
of Alcolea.

The end of the bridge on the left bank was fortified by a *tête-de-pont*; twelve guns were mounted on the right bank to enfilade the approach to it, and three thousand regular troops, supported by ten thousand armed peasants, waited in Alcolea to dispute the passage; while the heights on the left bank, in the rear of the French, were occupied by a cloud of insurgents ready to fall on their

rear as soon as they were actively engaged with the more regular force in the front. The French general, seeing such preparations ready for his reception, delayed the attack till the following morning, and meanwhile made his dispositions against the numerous enemies by whom he was surrounded. This was no difficult matter: a very small part only of the Spanish force was adequate to the encounter of regular soldiers. At daybreak on the following morning, General Fresia, with a battalion of infantry and a large body of cavalry, attacked the peasants on the left bank, and by a few charges dispersed them: at the same time a column with ease broke into the *tête-de-pont*, the works of which were not yet finished, and rapidly charging across the bridge, of which the arches had not been cut, routed the Spanish troops at Alcolea on the opposite side with such loss that all their artillery was taken. Echevaria, the commander, despairing of defending Cordova, fled with such precipitance, that before night he reached Ecija, twelve leagues from the field of battle.¹

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

June 8.

¹ Foy, iii.
224, 230.
Nap. i. 112,
113. Tor. i.
320, 321.

Abandoned to their own resources, and destitute of any leaders for their guidance, the magistrates having all fled on the first alarm, the inhabitants of Cordova, before which the French presented themselves the same day, were in no condition to resist the invaders. The gates nevertheless were shut, and the old towers which flanked their approaches filled with armed men, by whom, as the cannon of the enemy approached, a feeble fire was kept up. A parleying for surrender, however, took place, and the conferences were going on, when, under pretence of a few random shots from some windows, the guns were discharged at the gates, which were instantly burst open; the troops rushed into the town, where hardly any resistance was made, but which notwithstanding underwent all the horrors of a place carried by assault. A scene of indescribable horror ensued, fraught with acute but passing suffering to the Spaniards, with lasting disgrace to the

25.
Taking and
sack of
Cordova.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

French. A universal pillage took place. Every public establishment was sacked, every private house plundered. Armed and unarmed men were slaughtered indiscriminately ; women ravished ; the churches plundered ; even the venerable cathedral, originally the much-loved mosque of the Ommiade Caliphs, which had survived the devastations of the first Christian conquest, six hundred years before, was stripped of its riches and ornaments, and defiled by the vilest debauchery. Nor was this merely the unbridled license of subaltern insubordination, too common on such occasions with the best disciplined forces. The general-in-chief and superior officers themselves set the first example of a rapacity as pernicious as it was disgraceful ; and from the plunder of the Treasury and Office of Consolidation, Dupont contrived to realise above 10,000,000 reals, or £100,000 sterling. Not content with this hideous devastation, the French general, when the sack had ceased, overwhelmed the city by an enormous contribution. It is some consolation, amidst so frightful a display of military license and unbridled cupidity, that a righteous retribution speedily overtook its perpetrators ; that it was the load of their public and private plunder which shortly after retarded their retreat along the banks of the Guadalquivir ; and that it was anxiety to preserve their ill-gotten spoil which paralysed their arms in the field, and brought an unheard-of disgrace on the French standards.¹*

¹ Foy, iii.
229, 231.
Tor. i. 321,
323. Nap. i.
113. South.
i. 475, 476.
Lond. i. 87.

* Colonel Napier says, (i. 114, 1st edit.) "As the inhabitants took no part in the contest, and received the French without any signs of aversion, the town *was protected from pillage*, and Dupont fixed his headquarters there." It would be well if he would specify the authority on which this assertion is made, as it is directly contrary to the united testimony of even the most liberal French and Spanish historians. Foy says, with his usual candour, "To some musket-shots, discharged almost by accident from the windows, the French answered by a continued discharge, and speedily burst open the gates. Men without arms, without the means of resistance, were slaughtered in the streets ; the houses, the churches, even the celebrated mosque, which the Christians had converted into a cathedral, were alike sacked. The ancient capital of the Ommiade Caliphs, the greatest kings which Spain ever beheld, saw scenes of horror renewed such as it had not witnessed since the city was taken in 1236 by Ferdinand King of Castile.

Dupont remained several days at Cordova; but learning that the insurrection had spread, and was gathering strength in all directions, and finding his communications with Madrid intercepted by the patriot bands in his rear, he deemed it imprudent to make any further advance in the direction of Seville. Meanwhile the insurgents closed around and hemmed him in on every side. The armed peasants of Jaen and its vicinity crossed the Guadalquivir, and overwhelmed the detachment left at Andujar in charge of the sick there, and with savage cruelty, in revenge for the sack of Cordova, put them all to death; the smugglers of the Sierra Morena, relinquishing their illicit traffic for a more heart-stirring conflict, issued from their gloomy retreats, and beset all the passes of their inaccessible mountains. Even the peasants of la Mancha had caught the flame. The magazines of Mudela had fallen into their power; the sick at Manzanares had been barbarously put to the sword; the roads were so beset that even considerable detachments in the rear were captured or defeated; General Roize, with a body of four hundred convalescents, was overthrown in the open plains of la Mancha; and after having joined five hundred light horse under General Ligier Belair, the united array was deemed inadequate to forcing the passes of the Sierra Morena, and fell back towards Toledo. These accumulating disasters, which were greatly magnified by popular rumour, and the impossibility of getting any

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

26.

Accumulation of forces
round the
invaders.

These terrible scenes had no excuse in the losses sustained by the conqueror; for the attack of the town had not cost them ten men, and the total success of the day had only weakened them by thirty killed and eighty wounded." Toreno, though a decided liberal Spanish historian, observes,—“Rushing into the town, the French proceeded, killing or wounding all those whom they met on their road: they sacked the houses, the temples, even the humblest dwellings of the poor. The ancient and celebrated cathedral became the prey of the insatiable and destructive rapacity of the stranger. The massacre was great, the quantity of precious spoil collected immense. From the single depots of the Treasury and the Consolidation, Dupont obtained ten million reals, besides the sums extracted from public and private places of deposit. It was thus that a population was delivered up to plunder which had neither made nor attempted the slightest resistance.”—See Foy, iii. 230, 231; and TORENO, i. 322.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Foy, iii.
234, 236.
Tor. ii. 325.
Nap. i. 114.

27.
Dismay of
the Span-
iards, and
irresolution
of Dupont.

correct detail of the facts from the general interruption of the communications, produced such an impression on Dupont that he deemed it hopeless to attempt any farther advance into Andalusia—a resolution which proved the salvation of that province, and, in the end, of Spain ; for such was the state of anarchy and irresolution which prevailed among the troops intrusted with its defence, that, had he advanced boldly forward and followed up his successes at Alcolea and Cordova with the requisite vigour, Seville would at once have fallen into his power, and the insurrection in that quarter might have been entirely crushed.¹

Castanos, indeed, was at the head of eight thousand regular troops, drawn from the camp at St Roque, and an enthusiastic but undisciplined body of thirty thousand armed peasants assembled at Utrera. But the latter part of this force was incapable of any efficient operations in the field ; and such was the consternation occasioned, in the first instance, by the success of the French irruption, that the general-in-chief was desirous of retiring to Cadiz, and making its impregnable fortifications the citadel of an intrenched camp, where the new levies might acquire some degree of consistency, and the support of ten or twelve thousand British troops might, in case of necessity, be obtained. The authority of Castanos was merely nominal ; Morla, governor of Cadiz, was his enemy ; and the junta of Seville issued orders independent of either : so that the former general, despairing of success, had actually, under pretence of providing for the security of Cadiz, embarked his heavy artillery for that fortress. From this disgrace, however, the Spaniards were relieved by the apprehensions of the enemy. A pause in an invading army is dangerous at all times, but especially so when an insurrection is to be put down by the moral influence of its advance. The hesitation of Dupont at Cordova proved his ruin. He remained ten days inactive there, during which the whole effect of his victory was lost. Confidence returned to the enemy from the hourly increase

of their force, and the evident alarm of the French general : and at length some intercepted despatches to Savary were found to contain so doleful an account of his situation, that not only were all thoughts of retiring farther laid aside, but it was resolved immediately to advance, and surround the enemy in the city which he had conquered.¹

The fears of Dupont, however, prevented Cordova from a second time becoming the theatre of military license. Detachments of peasants had occupied all the passes in the Sierra Morena : troops, including some regulars, were accumulating in the direction of Granada, with the design of seizing Carolina and intercepting his retreat to la Mancha. Fame had magnified the amount of the forces descending into the plains of Leon, under Cuesta and Blake ; and rumours had got abroad that Savary was fortifying himself in the Retiro. Unable to withstand the sinister presentiments consequent on such an accumulation of adverse incidents, the French general resolved to fall back ; and accordingly broke up from Cordova on the 16th June, and three days afterwards reached Andujar, without having experienced any molestation. A strong detachment was immediately sent off to Jaen, which defeated the insurgents, and took a severe but not undeserved vengeance on the inhabitants for their barbarity to the sick at Andujar, by sacking and burning the town.* The supplies, however, which Dupont expected from this excursion were not obtained ; for every article of provisions which the town contained was consumed in the conflagration. Both sides after this continued inactive for above three weeks, during which the sick in the French hospital, as usual with a retreating army, rapidly augmented ; while the Spanish forces, under Castanos, which

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹Nap. i. 114,
115. Foy,
iii. 234, 236.
Tor. ii. 326.
Nap. i. App.
No. 13.

28.

Retreat of
Dupont to
Andujar and
Baylen.

June 16.

June 19.

* That severity, however deplorable, was perhaps rendered necessary, and therefore justified, by the massacre of the sick at Andujar : but, in the prosecution of their orders, the French soldiers proceeded to excesses as wanton as they were savage ; massacring old men, and infants at the breast, and exercising the last acts of cruelty on some sick friars of St Domingo and St Augustine, who could not escape from the town.—TORENO, i. 326.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

now approached, increased so much, by reinforcements from all quarters, that that general could now muster above twenty thousand regular infantry and two thousand horse, besides a motley crowd of thirty thousand armed peasants under his command. During the same period, however, powerful reinforcements reached the French general; for Gobert, with his division, whose absence from Leon Napoleon had so bitterly lamented, joined Vedel at BAYLEN on the 15th July, and a brigade was pushed on under Ligier Belair to open up the communication with the main body at Andujar. But the Spanish generals, now deeming the escape of the French impossible, were taking measures for enveloping the whole, and forcing them to surrender.¹

¹ Nap. i.
117, 120.
Foy, iv. 49,
52. Tor. i.
326, 360.

29.
Spanish plan
of attack,
and prepara-
tory move-
ments on
both sides.

In truth the long delay afforded by the inactivity of Dupont had been turned to the best account by the Spanish general. In the interim he contrived to give a certain degree of consistence to his numerous but tumultuous array of peasants: while the disembarkation of General Spencer with five thousand English troops chiefly from Gibraltar, at port St Mary's, near Cadiz, inspired general confidence by securing a rallying point in case of disaster. At length the regular troops from Granada, St Roque, Cadiz, and other quarters having all assembled, to the number of eight-and-twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse, a combined plan of attack was agreed on. The army was arranged in three divisions; the first, under Reding, a Swiss general of distinction, brother to the intrepid patriot of the same name,² received orders to cross the Guadalquivir at Mengibar, and move to Baylen, in the rear of Andujar, where Dupont still was, and between that town and the Sierra Morena; the second, under Coupigny, was to pass the same river at Villanueva and support Reding; while Castanos, with the third and the reserve, was to press the enemy in front, and a body of irregular troops, under Don Juan de la Cruz, passing by the bridge of Marmolejo, to harass

² *Ante*, ch.
xxv. § 59.

July 11.

his right flank. A glance at the map will at once show that the effect of these dispositions, which were ably combined, was to throw a preponderating force in the rear of Dupont directly on his line of communications, and either separate the division under his immediate command from those of Gobert and Vedel, or interpose between them all and the road to Madrid. They were promptly and vigorously carried into execution. Castanos, with the troops under his immediate command, approached to within a league of Andujar, and so alarmed Dupont that he sent to Vedel for assistance, who came with his whole division, except thirteen hundred men left to guard the ford of Mengibar. This small body was there attacked, two days after, by Reding with eight thousand men, defeated, and the passage of the river forced; Gobert, advancing from Baylen to support the broken detachment, received a ball in the forehead, and fell dead on the spot. The French in dismay retreated to Baylen; and the Spaniards, under Reding, seeing themselves interposed in this manner between Gobert and Vedel, with forces little superior to either, taken singly, also retired in the night by the ford to the other bank of the river. But this bold irruption into the middle of their line of march, and the death of Gobert, spread consternation through the army. A loud cannonade, heard the whole day from the side of Andujar, where Castanos was engaging the attention of Dupont, induced the belief that they were beset on all sides; and the accounts which reached both armies in the evening of the disaster experienced before Valencia, increased the confidence of the Spaniards as much as it depressed the feelings of the French soldiers.^{1*}

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

July 14.

July 16.

¹Tor. i. 360,
363. Foy,
iv. 59, 66.
Jom. iii. 60,
61. Nap. i.
120, 121.

In the whole French army there was not a general of

* A singular coincidence occurred in relation to the place and day of the action in which General Gobert lost his life. On the same day (16th July) nearly six hundred years before, (16th July 1212,) there had been gained at the same place the great battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, by Alphonso IX. over the Mussulman host of Spain and Africa, two hundred thousand strong.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

30.

Character of
Dupont.

division who bore a higher character than Dupont ; and when he set out for Andalusia, in command of so considerable a force, it was universally believed that he would win his marshal's baton at Cadiz. In 1801, he had distinguished himself, under Brune, in the winter campaign with the Austrians on the Italian plains : in 1805, his gallant conduct had eminently contributed to the glorious triumph at Ulm : in 1807, he had been not less conspicuous in the Polish war at Eylau and Friedland. His courage was unquestionable : his talents of no ordinary kind. But it is one thing to possess the spirit and intrepidity which makes a good general of division or colonel of grenadiers ; it is another and a very different thing to be endowed with the moral resolution which is requisite to withstand disaster, and act with the decision and energy indispensable in a general-in-chief. In the situation in which he was now placed, there was but one course to adopt, and that was, to mass all his forces together, and bear down in a single column upon the enemy, so as to re-open his communications, and secure, at all hazards, his retreat : and twenty thousand French soldiers assembled together were adequate to bursting through at a single point all the troops of Spain.¹

¹ Foy, iv. 67,
72. Tor. i.
363. Jom.
iii. 60.

31.

Singular
manner in
which the
armies be-
came inter-
laced.
July 17.

Instead of this, he divided his force, and thereby exposed it to destruction. Vedel received orders to lead back to Baylen his own division, while the general-in-chief himself continued fronting Castanos at Andujar. But meanwhile Generals Dufour and Ligier Belair, who had been left at Baylen, were so much disquieted by the forces under Reding and Coupigny, which had now united together, and threatened them with an attack, that they retired towards Carolina, on the road to the Sierra Morena ; and Vedel, finding, on his arrival at Baylen,

Gobert fell on the field still called the *field of massacre*, from the carnage made of the Moors on that memorable occasion—the greatest victory, after that of Tours, ever gained by the Christians over the soldiers of the Crescent.
—TORENO, i. 363.

that it was entirely evacuated by the French troops, followed them to the same place, with the design of securing the passes of the mountains in their rear. By this fatal movement the two divisions of the French army were irrevocably separated; and Reding and Coupigny, finding no enemy to oppose them, entered in great force into Baylen, and established themselves there. Thus the two hostile armies became interlaced in the most extraordinary manner: Castanos having Dupont between him and Reding, and Reding being interposed between the French general and his lieutenant Vedel.¹

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

July 18.

¹ Foy, iv. 67,
77. Tor. i.
363, 364.
Nap. i. 122.
Jom. iii. 60,
61.

In such a situation a decisive advantage to one or other party is at hand; and it generally falls to the commander who boldly takes the initiative, and brings his combined forces to bear on the isolated corps of his opponent. Dupont, sensible of his danger, broke up from Andujar late on the evening of the 18th, and marched towards Baylen, on his direct line of retreat; while Reding and Coupigny, finding themselves relieved of all fears from Vedel and Dufour, who had moved to Carolina, at the entrance of the mountains, turned their faces to the southward, and early on the following morning marched towards Andujar, with the design of co-operating with Castanos in the attack upon Dupont. Hearing, soon after starting, of his approach towards them, they took post in a strong position, intersected with ravines and covered by olive woods, in front of Baylen; and soon the French outposts appeared in sight. Their forces, widely scattered, and coming up in disorder, resembled rather a detachment guarding an immense convoy than a corps equipped for field operations; so heavily were they encumbered with five hundred baggage-waggons, which conveyed along the artillery and ammunition stores, and the ill-gotten plunder of Cordova.²

32.
Movements
which led to
the battle of
Baylen.
July 19.

² Jom. iii.
61, 62. Nap.
i. 122. Tor. i.
364. Foy,
iv. 77.

Great was the dismay of the French troops when, in the obscurity of the morning, an hour before sunrise, they suddenly came upon the Spanish array right in their

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

33.

Battle of
Baylen.
July 19.

front, occupying this advantageous position. There was no time, however, for deliberation; for Castanos, having heard of their departure from Andujar, had shortly after entered that town, and, passing through it with the bulk of his forces, was already threatening their rear. Dupont immediately made his dispositions for forcing his way, sword in hand, through the barrier of steel which opposed his progress; and had his troops been concentrated, there can be little doubt that he would have succeeded in doing so, and either thrown Reding back towards Vedel, or opened up his own communication with that general. But at this decisive moment the sack of Cordova proved their ruin. The troops were scattered along a line of march of three leagues in length, encumbered with innumerable waggons; the best were in rear to guard the precious convoy from the assaults of Castanos. Hastily assembling such troops as he could collect in front, Dupont, with three thousand men, commenced an attack when the day broke, at four in the morning; but his troops, fatigued by a long night-march, and discouraged by the unexpected and dangerous enemy which obstructed their advance, could make no impression on the Swiss regiments and Walloon guards, the flower of the Spanish army, which there awaited their approach. After a gallant struggle, in which they sustained severe loss, they were driven back, and lost not only some guns which in the commencement of the action they had taken from the enemy, but even their own.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
61, 62. Tor.
i. 364, 366.
Foy, iv. 77,
80. Nap. i.
122, 123.

34.
Defeat of
the French.

As brigade after brigade successively came up to the front, they were brought forward to the attack, but with no better success. The French troops, wearied by a night-march, choked with dust, disordered by the encumbrance of baggage-waggons, overwhelmed by the burning sun of Andalusia in the dog-days, were no match for the steady Swiss and Walloon guards, who had rested all night coolly under the shade, in a strong position, or even for the new levies, to whom Reding had imparted his own fearless

spirit. Their guns, which came up one by one in haste and confusion, and never equalled those which the enemy had in battery, were speedily dismounted by the superior force and aim of the Spanish artillery. Two thousand men had already fallen on the side of the invaders, while scarce a tenth of the number were disabled on that of their enemies. Heat and thirst overwhelmed even the bravest soldiers; and that fatal dejection which is the forerunner of disaster, was rapidly spreading among the young conscripts, when two Swiss regiments, which had hitherto bravely maintained the combat on the right, came to a parley with their brethren in the Spanish lines, and passed over to the side of Reding. At the same time a loud cannonade was heard in the rear; and disordered fugitives, breathless from running, and almost melting with heat, burst through the ranks, and announced that a large body of the Spaniards under la Pena, the advanced guard of Castanos, was already menacing the rear. Despairing now of extricating himself from his difficulties, ignorant of the situation of Vedel and Dufour, and deeming a capitulation the only way of preserving the army from destruction, Dupont sent to Reding to propose a suspension of arms, which was at once agreed to.¹

While Dupont, with the corps under his immediate command, not ten thousand strong, was thus maintaining a painful and hopeless struggle with the concentrated masses of the Spaniards, more than double the amount of his troops, the remainder of his army, of equal force, under Vedel and Dufour, was occupied to no purpose at a distance from the scene of action. The whole of the 18th was spent by these generals at Carolina in allowing the soldiers to repose, and repairing the losses of the artillery. But as the enemy, whom they expected to find at the entrance of the passes, had disappeared, and a loud cannonade was heard the following morning on the side of Baylen, they rightly judged that it was there that the

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Foy, iv. 77,
84. Tor. i.
364, 367.
Nap. i. 122,
123. Jom.
iii. 61, 62.
Lond. i. 94,
95.

35.
Tardy arrival of Vedel, who shares in the disgrace.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

decisive point was to be found, and set out in that direction. The distance from Carolina to Baylen was only eighteen miles ; that from Andujar to the same place was sixteen : by a little activity, therefore, Vedel might have reached the rear of Reding as soon as Castanos could that of Dupont, and then the fate which the Spanish generals designed for the French troops must have overtaken themselves. When he arrived at Guaroman, however, about half way, the troops were so much exhausted by the heat that Vedel, though he heard the cannonade, now only six miles distant, hourly increasing, had the weakness to allow them some hours of repose. This halt proved decisive : while it continued, Dupont's troops, whom he might with ease have reached in two hours, were reduced to desperation. At noon the firing suddenly ceased, and the soldiers flattered themselves that the danger had passed : it was the suspension of arms, which was about to bring unheard-of disgrace upon them all. When they resumed their march, at two in the afternoon, they soon came upon the rear of Reding, and, discrediting the statement of an armistice, which was immediately made known to them, commenced an attack, made prisoners a battalion of Irish in the service of Spain, captured some guns, and dispersed the new levies which defended them. They were within a league of their comrades in distress, when an officer from Dupont arrived with the mournful intelligence that a suspension of arms had been agreed to, and that they had no alternative but submission. It was all over ; the halt of a few hours at Guaroman had ruined the expedition : twenty thousand men were about to lay down their arms ; Europe was to be electrified, the empire of Napoleon shaken to its foundation. Such is the importance of time in war.¹

¹ Tor. i. 367,
368. Foy,
iv. 85, 91.
Nap. i. 122,
124. Jom.
ii. 62, 63.

36.
Capitula-
tion of
Dupont.

Dupont in the outset proposed a capitulation, in virtue of which the whole French troops were to be allowed to retire, with their artillery and baggage, out of Andalusia ; and Castanos was at first inclined to have acceded to the

proposal, deeming it an immense advantage to clear that province of the enemy, and gain time in this way for completing his preparations. But at this critical moment the despatches were intercepted and brought to headquarters, which announced the approach of Cuesta to the capital, and recalled Dupont to aid in its defence. A convention would no longer be listened to: an absolute surrender of arms was required, under condition only of the troops being sent to France by sea. After many fruitless efforts to avoid so hard a fate, this was agreed to by Dupont; but he insinuated to Vedel that he might endeavour to extricate himself from the toils. That general accordingly retired to Carolina; but the Spaniards threatened to put Dupont and his whole division to the sword if this movement was not stopped, and Vedel included in the capitulation. Intimidated by these menaces, orders to this effect were despatched by Dupont: and so completely was the spirit of the French officers broken, that, out of twenty-four whom Vedel assembled to deliberate on the course they should pursue at this crisis, only *four*, including that general himself, voted for disregarding the capitulation, and continuing their retreat, which was now open, to la Mancha. Nay, to such an extent did the panic extend, that a Spanish detachment crossed the mountains, and made prisoners, upon the strength of the capitulation of Baylen, all the French depots and insulated bodies as far as Toledo, which, with those who laid down their arms on the field, swelled the captives to twenty-one thousand. Two thousand had fallen in the battle—a thousand in the previous operations, or from the effect of sickness: twenty-four thousand men were lost to France!¹

¹ Nap. i. 12,
124. Foy,
iv. 97, 106.
Tor. i. 370,
372. Jom.
ii. 64.

Language can convey to future ages no adequate idea of the impression which this extraordinary event produced in Europe. Hardly anything since the opening of the Revolutionary war had at all approached to it in importance. Hitherto the career of the French armies

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37.

Immense
sensation
which it
produces
in Spain
and over
Europe.

had been one of almost unbroken success; and even though the talents of the Archduke Charles and the firmness of the Russians had for a time arrested the torrent, yet it had been suspended only to break out shortly after with accumulated force, and sweep away every obstacle which courage, combination, or genius could oppose to its progress. Even at their lowest point of depression, disgrace had never sullied the Republican ranks; victorious or vanquished, they had ever commanded the respect of their enemies; no large bodies had laid down their arms; their retreat had ever been that of brave and honourable men. Now, however, a disaster such as France had rarely experienced since the battle of Pavia had overtaken their standards: twenty thousand men had surrendered; the imperial eagles had found in Andalusia the Caudine Forks. Fame and incorrect information gave greater importance to this triumph than even its intrinsic magnitude deserved. It was unknown or overlooked that it was by a skilful series of military movements on the one side, and an extraordinary combination of errors on the other, that Dupont had been brought to such hazardous straits; by the firmness of the Swiss and Walloon guards, the precision in fire of the Spanish artillery, and the inexperience of his own troops, that he had been compelled to surrender. It was generally imagined that the French veterans had laid down their arms to the Spanish peasants; it was unknown or forgotten that the victory was really gained by experienced soldiers: and the imaginations of men, both in the Peninsula and over all Europe, were fired by the belief that a new era had dawned upon mankind; that the superiority of disciplined troops and regular armies was at an end; and that popular enthusiasm and general zeal were all that were necessary to secure the victory, even over the greatest and most formidable veteran armies.

How widely this belief spread, how generally it was acted upon, and what oceans of blood it caused to be

spilt in vain in Spain itself, will amply appear in the sequel of this history; and probably, by inspiring the people of that country with an overweening idea of their own strength, and of the capability of raw levies to contend with regular forces, it contributed, in no small degree, to that almost unbroken train of disasters in the field which their armies, when unsupported by the British, subsequently experienced during the remainder of the war. But in the first instance it produced a prodigious and most important burst of exultation and enthusiasm. It determined the conduct of many of the *grandees* and nobles of Spain, who had at Bayonne adhered to the usurper, but now, with the Dukes del Infantado and del Parque, Cevallos and Pennela, rejoined the ranks of their countrymen; and by throwing the capital and chief towns of the kingdom, with the exception of the frontier fortresses, into the hands of the insurgents, gave the struggle, in the eyes of all Europe, as well as of the people themselves, the character of a national contest. Nor was the effect less momentous over the whole Continent, by affording a convincing proof that the French were not invincible, and opening the eyes of all governments to the immense addition which the military force, on which they had hitherto exclusively relied, might receive from the ardour and enthusiasm of the people.¹

Napoleon was at Bordeaux when the account of the capitulation reached him. Never, since the disaster at Trafalgar, had he been so completely overwhelmed: for a time he could not speak; the excess of his depression excited the alarm of his ministers. "Is your Majesty unwell?" said the minister for foreign affairs, Maret. "No."—"Has Austria declared war?" "Would to God that were all!"—"What, then, has happened?" The Emperor recounted the humiliating details of the capitulation, and added, "That an army should be beaten is nothing—it is the daily fate of war, and is easily repaired; but that an army should submit to a

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38.

Disastrous
effect of the
delusive
opinion en-
tertained
of this vic-
tory.

¹ Montg. vi.
345. Foy,
iv. 110, 114.
Lond. i. 97.
Tor. i. 378.
Nell. i. 124,
125. Jom.
ii. 64.

39.

Opinion of
Napoleon
on this
capitula-
tion.

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dishonourable capitulation is a stain on the glory of our arms which can never be effaced. Wounds inflicted on honour are incurable. The moral effect of this catastrophe will be terrible. What! they have had the infamy to consent that the havresacks of our soldiers should be searched like those of robbers! Could I have ever expected that of General Dupont, a man whom I loved, and was rearing up to become a marshal? They say he had no other way to prevent the destruction of the army, to save the lives of the soldiers! Better, far better, to have perished with arms in their hands—that no one should have escaped! Their death would have been glorious: we should have avenged them. You can always supply the place of soldiers: honour alone, when once lost, can never be regained. It is in vain to tell me the soldiers were conscripts, unused to arms. Were they inferior to those I commanded in Italy? It is always the general who makes the army. Better a lion in command of a troop of deer, than a deer at the head of a troop of lions. Oh! wretched caprice of human affairs! A whole lifetime lost by a surprise of the senses, a shake of the nerves! But the fate of empires must not be subjected to such chances. The safety of the state demands an inexorable example. In war, a great disaster always designates an enormous fault!” What a sentence on Napoleon’s own conduct in 1812!¹

¹ Thib. vi.
439. Bign.
vii. 323.

40.
Shameful
violation of
the capitula-
tion by the
Spaniards.

If the capitulation itself was dishonourable to the French arms, the subsequent violation of it by the Spaniards was still more disgraceful to the victors, and remains a dark stain on the Castilian good faith. From the moment that the long file of prisoners began their march towards Cadiz as the place of their embarkation, it was found to be extremely difficult to restrain the indignation of the people, who loudly complained that so large a body of men, for the most part stained by robbery or murder committed in Spain, should be forwarded to France, apparently for no other purpose but that they

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might be again let loose in the Peninsula to commit similar devastations. Alarmed at the increase and serious character of the excitement, the junta of Seville consulted Castanos and Morla, the governor of Cadiz, on the course which they should adopt. The first, with the honour and good faith of a gallant soldier, in opposition to the public clamour, insisted that the capitulation should be religiously observed;—the latter, setting aside every other consideration in the desire to gain a temporary popularity with the multitude, contended that no treaty could be binding with men who had committed such enormities on the Spanish soil as the French prisoners; that to let them return to France, loaded with the spoil of Cordova, torn from the wretched inhabitants in open violation of the laws of war, would be a palpable act of insanity; and that, having once got them in their power, the only sensible course was to detain them till the war was over. These specious but sophistical arguments, unworthy of a Spanish officer, found a responsive echo in the breasts of the infuriated multitude; the public effervescence increased as they advanced in their march. In consequence of the discovery of precious spoils in the knapsacks of some of the soldiers at Lebrixa, a tumult ensued between the peasantry and the prisoners, which cost many lives to the latter; the sacred vases of Cordova and Jaen were loudly demanded; and at Port St Mary's, the accidental circumstance of one of these holy cups falling from the havresack of a soldier gave rise to such a tumult that a general search of the baggage could no longer be prevented.¹

These disorders were, perhaps, unavoidable in the circumstances in which the Spanish government of the province was situated, and the unexampled treachery with which they had been assailed by the French; but for the subsequent violation of the capitulation no apology can be found. Desirous of maintaining their popularity, the junta of Seville acceded to the opinion of Morla, in

¹ Tor. i. 375,
376. Foy,
iv. 107, 108.
Nap. i. 125,
126.

41.
And their
disgraceful
treatment of
the prison-
ers.

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1808.

which they in vain endeavoured to get Lord Collingwood and Sir Hew Dalrymple to concur. Instead of being sent by sea to France, the soldiers and regimental officers were crowded together into the hulks of Cadiz, where, such were the privations and misery to which they were subjected, very few remained at the conclusion of the war.* Dupont, the officers of his staff, and all the generals, were permitted to return to France; but the remainder, nearly eighteen thousand in number, were kept in lingering suffering in their dismal captivity, and, with the exception of a few who accepted service under the Spanish government, and took the first opportunity to desert to their beloved eagles, and those confined in one hulk, who overpowered their guards during the night and contrived to float her across to the lines of their countrymen three years afterwards, during the siege of Cadiz, hardly any ever revisited their native country.† This frightful act of injustice was as impolitic as it was disgraceful. It gave the French, in their turn, too fair a ground for inveighing against the perfidy of their enemies, exasperated the feelings of their armies, who had at first entered into this contest with lukewarm dispositions or undisguised aversion,¹ and repeatedly afterwards stimu-

¹ Foy, iv. 107, 109.
Tor. i. 375, 377. Nap. i. 125, 127. South. i. 502, 510. Collingwood, ii. 124.

* Sir Hew Dalrymple's answer to the junta of Seville, when his opinion was asked on this subject, is worthy of a place in history:—"It is quite clear that the capitulation is binding on the contracting parties, so far as they have the means of carrying it into execution. The laws of honour, not considerations of expediency, should ever govern soldiers in solemn stipulations of this kind; the surrender of General Vedel could only be supposed to have arisen from the confidence which he placed in the honour which characterised the Spanish nation. The reputation of a government, especially one newly formed, is public property, which ought not to be lightly squandered. The matter, therefore, is clear on considerations of honour and justice: even viewed in the light of expedience, it is far from being beyond dispute." Lord Collingwood, when applied to, answered, that if the Spanish government had not seamen enough to man transport-vessels for conveying the troops, he would order British seamen to fit out their merchant-vessels for that purpose: that the capitulation must be observed so far as possible; if the conditions were impossible, they annulled themselves.—SOUTHEY, i. 502, 504; COLLINGWOOD'S *Memoirs*, ii. 127, 128.

† The fate of the generals and officers who were returned to France from Cadiz, was hardly less deplorable than that of their comrades who lingered in

lated them to desperate and sanguinary resistance, under circumstances when, with a more trustworthy enemy, they would have entered into terms of accommodation.

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The fatal news of the capitulation of Baylen arrived at Madrid on the 29th July, and diffused universal consternation among the adherents of Joseph. A council of war was immediately summoned by Savary; and opinions were much divided on the course which should be pursued. Moncey proposed that Bessières' division should be recalled, and that with their united forces they should take up a position in front of the capital, and defend it to the last extremity. But Savary, to whom the situation which he held as lieutenant-general of the King, as well as the known confidence which he enjoyed with the Emperor, gave a preponderating voice in the deliberations, strongly urged the necessity of retiring to the northward, and taking counsel from circumstances, as to the point to which the retreat should be prolonged. On the 30th July the intrusive King commenced his retreat: the hospitals had previously been evacuated for Bayonne; the heavy artillery, which could not be brought away, amounting to eighty pieces, was spiked; but the retiring monarch and his military satellites carried off with them all the jewels

42.
Departure
of Joseph
from Mad-
rid, and
concentra-
tion of the
French
troops be-
hind the
Ebro.

prolonged torments on board the Spanish hulks. Dupont and all the generals were immediately arrested and sent to prison, where they lingered, without either trial or investigation, for many years afterwards. General Marescot, who, though in a subaltern rank, had taken a certain part in the negotiation, loudly, but in vain, demanded to be brought to a court-martial. Neither he nor Dupont, nor any of the superior officers connected with the capitulation of Baylen, were ever more heard of till after the fall of Napoleon in 1814. In 1812, a court of inquiry sat on the generals, and condemned them all: but public opinion was far from supporting their decision. Shortly after (1st May 1812,) an imperial decree forbade, on pain of death, any capitulation in the field which should amount to a laying down of arms. Such was Napoleon's irritation with regard to everything connected with this convention, that, when he afterwards saw General Legendre, who, as chief of the staff to Dupont, had officially affixed his signature to the treaty, he was seized with a trembling from head to foot, and his indignation found vent in these words:—"How, General! did your hand not wither when you signed that infamous capitulation?" He never afterwards heard Baylen alluded to without evincing such indignation as showed how deeply it had wounded his mind.—För, iv. 110, 113.

Feb. 17, 1812.
May 1.

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and precious articles from the palaces they had so recently occupied. They retired by the great road to Burgos, where headquarters were established on the 9th August; the rearguard collecting as it went along all the garrisons of the towns and castles which had been occupied by the French troops to the south of the Ebro. They experienced no molestation from the Spaniards during their retreat; notwithstanding which, all the villages and hamlets through which they passed were given up to pillage, and a great number burned to the ground. Soon after Joseph reached Burgos, Bessières arrived with his corps, and Verdier came up with the force which had been engaged in the siege of Saragossa; so that, including Moncey's corps and the troops brought up from Madrid, above fifty thousand veteran troops could, notwithstanding all the losses of the campaign, be collected for the defence of the Ebro.¹*

¹ Foy, iv.
117, 124.
Thib. vi.
442, 443.
Sav. iii.
275, 277.

While this decisive stroke was struck in the south of Spain, the contest had already assumed elsewhere a sanguinary character; the success had been more checked in the Catalonian mountains; and the British army, under the guidance of WELLINGTON, had chased the French eagles from the rock of Lisbon.

Napoleon, who was by no means aware of the almost insurmountable obstacles which the tenacious spirit and rugged mountains of Catalonia were to oppose to his

43.
Campaign
in Cata-
lonia.

* Savary was blamed by Napoleon for this retreat to the Ebro, and he alleged that the line of the Douro might have been maintained, and the operations against Saragossa in consequence not interrupted. In justice to the French general, however, it must be observed, that his situation in the capital, after the surrender of Dupont, had become extremely critical; and that the losses which the troops at the capital had undergone, were such as to preclude the hope of a successful stand being made against the united Spanish armies which might advance from the south. Shortly after his arrival at Madrid he had written in these luminous and explicit terms to the Emperor, in a despatch which throws great light on the state of the contest at that period:—"It is no longer a mere affair in which, by punishing the leaders, a revolt may be suppressed. If the arrival of the King does not pacify the country, we shall have a regular war on our hands with the troops of the line, and one of extermination with the peasantry. The system of sending movable columns over the provinces is likely to induce partial

July 10.

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arms, had directed Duhesme to co-operate with Lefebvre-Desnouettes in the siege of Saragossa. In order to accomplish this object, that general, early in June, fitted out two corps: the first, four thousand five hundred strong, under the orders of General Chabran, was despatched towards the south, with instructions to make itself master of Tarragona and Tortosa, and then proceed on and co-operate with Marshal Moncey in the attack on Valencia; while the second, under General Schwartz, consisting of three thousand eight hundred men, after punishing Manresa, destroying the powder-mills there, and levying a heavy contribution on its inhabitants, was to push on to Lerida, and, after securing that important fortress, give its aid to Lefebvre-Desnouettes before the walls of Saragossa. These columns quitted Barcelona early in June, and directed their march to their respective points of destination; but both experienced defeat. The tocsin was ringing on all the hills; the villages were deserted; the woods and higher parts of the mountains, the rugged passes and inaccessible thickets, formed so many rallying points to the courageous Somatenes.¹*

June 4.
1 Duhesme,
18. Nap. i.
75. Tor. i.
309. Foy,
iv. 143, 147,
312.

Schwartz, indeed, in his march towards Saragossa, forced the celebrated pass of Bruch, though beset with armed men; but, advancing a little farther, he encountered a disaster at Casa Mansana. The villagers assailed the invaders with showers of stones, balls, and even boiling water, from the roofs of the houses: the peasants,

44.
Defeat of
Schwartz
near Casa
Mansana.
June 6.

checks, which will lead to the spreading of the insurrection. It is indispensable that your Majesty should consider seriously of the means of carrying on the war. We lose four hundred men a-month in the hospitals alone; our army can in no respect be compared to that which occupies Germany. Everything has been calculated according to the turn which it was expected affairs would assume, not that which they have actually taken. Many battalions have not four officers; the whole cavalry is fit for the hospital together. The crowds of young and presumptuous men who crowd the army, contribute rather to embarrassment than anything else. There is an incalculable difference between such coxcombs and a steady veteran sergeant or officer."

—SAVARY to NAPOLEON; FOY, iv. 34, 35.

* The *Somatenes* are the *levée-en-masse*, which, by an ancient law of Catalonia, are bound to turn out and defend their parishes whenever the *Somaten*, or alarm-bell, is heard from the churches.—TORENO, i. 309.

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June 8.

who had fled in disorder a few minutes before through the streets, returned to the charge. Threatened on all sides, Schwartz resolved to retreat, which he effected at first in good order; but his advanced guard having attempted, during the night, to force the passage of the town of Esparraguera, which lay on his road, was repulsed with loss, and his troops, thrown into disorder by that nocturnal check, were never able to gain their proper array till they found refuge, two days after, under the cannon of Barcelona. Chabran, whose route lay through a less mountainous district, reached Tarragona in safety on the 7th, and got possession of that important town without opposition: but Duhesme was so much alarmed by the repulse of Schwartz, that he hastily recalled him to Barcelona. So dangerous is it to make a retrograde movement while engaged with an insurrection, that a very severe resistance was experienced in the retreat, at places where not a shot had been fired during the advance. Irritated by this opposition and the sanguinary excesses of the peasants, the French set fire to Villafranca as they retired; and Duhesme having sent Count Theodore Lecchi with the Italian division and Schwartz's troops to his assistance, the united columns again approached the pass of Bruch: but finding the Somatenes posted on its rugged cliffs in even greater strength than before, they fell back after a bloody skirmish, and regained the shelter of Barcelona, pursued up to the very gates by the dropping fire and taunting scoffs of their gallant though rustic opponents.^{1*}

June 14.

¹ Tor. i. 309,
315. Nap.
i. 75, 77.
Foy, iv. 143,
151. Du-
hesme, 18,
19.

45.

Universal
spread of
the insur-
rection.

These defeats produced the greater sensation, both among the French and Spaniards, that they were gained, not by regular troops, but by a tumultuary array of peasants, wholly undisciplined, and most of whom had then for the first time been engaged either in military service

* The inhabitants of Bruch, to commemorate their victory, erected a stone in the pass, with this pompous though laconic inscription:—"Victores Marengo, Austerlitz, et Jena, hic victi fuerunt diebus vi. et xiv. Junii, anno 1808."—Foy, iv. 151.

or exercise. They occasioned in consequence a universal insurrection in Catalonia; the cities equally as the mountains caught the flame. The burghers of Lerida, Tortosa, Tarragona, Gerona, and all the towns in the province not garrisoned by French troops, closed their gates, manned their ramparts, and elected juntas to direct measures of defence; while the mountain districts, which embraced four-fifths of the province, obeyed the animating call of the Somaten, and, under the guidance of their parish priests, organised a desperate Vendean warfare. Forty regiments, of a thousand men each, were ordered to be raised for active operations among these formidable mountaineers. Regular officers were, for the most part, obtained to direct their organisation; the ranks were in a short time complete, and, for the service of light troops, were of a very efficient description. An equal force was directed to be prepared as a reserve, in case their mountain fastnesses should be threatened by the enemy. The peculiar nature of these extensive and thickly-peopled hill-districts, as well as the character and resolution of their inhabitants; their rugged precipices, wood-clad steeps, and terraced slopes; their villages, perched like eyries on the summit of cliffs, and numerous forts and castles, each susceptible of a separate defence; their bold and energetic inhabitants, consisting of lawless smugglers or hardy peasants, long habituated to the enjoyment of almost unbounded practical freedom—rendered this warfare of a peculiarly hazardous and laborious description.^{1*}

¹ Foy, iv.
151, 155.
Tor. i. 315,
316. Nap.
i. 77.

Aware of the necessity of striking a decisive blow in the present critical state of affairs in the province,

* Though locally situated in an unlimited monarchy, the province of Catalonia, like those of Navarre and Biscay, has long enjoyed such extensive civil privileges as savour rather of democratic equality than despotic authority. Its social state differs altogether from that of Aragon, though they were so long united under the same sceptre. Nowhere, except in this mountain republic, is there so ardent a thirst after political freedom, or so large an enjoyment, at least in the mountainous districts, of its practical blessings. The inhabitants cherish the most profound hatred of the French, whom they accuse of having

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46.
Defeat of an
attempt by
the French
against
Gerona.
June 16.

June 17.

June 20.

Duhesme conceived that a sudden *coup-de-main* against GERONA, which lies on the direct road to France, would both re-establish his communications, which the insurrections in all directions had totally intercepted, and strike a general terror into the enemy. Accordingly, two days after the return of the former ill-fated expedition, he set out in the direction of that town, with six thousand of his best troops, taking the coast-road to avoid the fortress of Hostalrich, which was in the hands of the enemy. After cutting his way with great slaughter through a large body of Somatenes who endeavoured to obstruct his progress, he appeared on the 20th before Gerona. Little preparation had been made to repel an assault; but the gates were closed, and the inhabitants, in great numbers, were on the walls prepared to defend their hearths. Having at length got his scaling-ladders ready, and diverted the attention of the besieged by a skirmish with the Somatenes on the plains at a distance from the ramparts, the assaulting columns suddenly approached the walls at five in the afternoon. Though they got very near without being perceived, and a few brave men reached the summit, they were repulsed in two successive attacks with great slaughter; and Duhesme, having in vain tried the effect of a negotiation to induce a surrender, returned by forced marches to Barcelona, harassed at every step by the Somatenes, who, descending in great strength from the hills, inflicted a severe loss on his retreating columns.¹

¹ Nap. i. 77,
80. Foy,
iv. 151, 159.
Tor. i. 315,
317.

After this defeat, the whole plain round Barcelona, called the Llobregat, was filled with the enemy's troops; and General Duhesme, enraged at finding himself thus beset in the capital of the province, marched out against

excited their fathers to revolt against the government of Madrid, and abandoned them, when the contest was no longer conducive to their interests. In the long and opulent district which runs along the sea-shore, and contains the flourishing seaports of Tarragona, Rosas, and Barcelona, commercial interests prevail; and the alliance and consequent trade with England were as much the object of desire as the withering union with France had been a subject of aversion.—Foy, iv. 137, 138.

them, a week afterwards, and defeated a large body of the peasantry at the bridge of Molinos del Rey, capturing all their artillery. Rallying, however, at their old fastnesses of Bruch and Igualado, they again, when the French retired, returned to the Llobregat, and not only shut up the enemy within the ramparts of Barcelona, but established a communication with the insurgents in the interior, along the sea-coast, from the Pyrenean frontier to the mouth of the Ebro, the whole of which district became the theatre of insurrection. Napoleon, to whom the prolongation of the war in so many different quarters of Spain had become a subject of great uneasiness, no sooner received intelligence of these untoward events than he directed Duhesme to issue from Barcelona, relieve Figueras, where four hundred French were closely blockaded by the insurgent peasantry, and afterwards carry by assault both Rosas and Gerona. General Reille, whom he sent forward with a large convoy guarded by five thousand men, defeated the Somatenes before Figueras, and raised the blockade of that fortress; but when, encouraged by this success, he attempted a *coup-de-main* against Rosas, he sustained a repulse; and finding himself daily more closely straitened by the insurgents, was obliged to retire with considerable loss towards Gerona. About the same time the Spanish affairs in the whole province acquired a degree of consistency to which they had never previously attained, by the conclusion of a treaty between Lord Collingwood and the Marquis Palacios, governor of the Balearic Isles, in virtue of which the whole disposable force in those islands was conveyed to the Catalonian shores, and thirteen hundred good troops were directed towards Gerona. At the same time, Palacios himself, with four thousand five hundred men, and thirty-seven pieces of cannon, landed at Tarragona, where their presence excited a most extraordinary degree of enthusiasm.¹

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47.

Expedition
against
Rosas, which
is defeated.
June 30.

July 5.

July 11.

July 22.
1 Tor. i. 38,
39. Nap.
i. 82, 83.
Foy, iv. 169,
172. St-Cyr,
Guerre dans
la Catal. 14,
17. Casta-
nos, i. 32,
84.

Meanwhile Duhesme, with the main body of his forces,

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1808.

48.

Unsuccess-
ful siege of
Gerona.

Atlas,
Plate 60.

six thousand strong, a considerable train of heavy artillery, and everything requisite for a siege, set out from Barcelona and took the road for Gerona. He was long delayed, however, on the road, which runs close to the sea-shore, on the one side by the fire of an English frigate, under the command of LORD COCHRANE, which sent a shower of balls among his columns whenever they came within range, and by the desultory but incessant attacks of the Somatenes on the other. At length, after encountering great difficulties and experiencing a heavy loss, he succeeded in forcing his way, by the hill-road, to Hostalrich, which he summoned in vain to surrender; and, leaving a few troops only to observe its garrison, he, by infinite skill and no small good fortune, avoided the guns of that fortress, and proceeded on to Gerona, under the walls of which he effected a junction with Reille's troops, who had come up from Rosas. Their united strength being now, notwithstanding all their losses, above nine thousand men, operations in form were commenced against the place. Before this could be done, however, the succours from Majorca had been thrown into the town; and as the besiegers were themselves cut off from all communication, both with their reserve magazines at Barcelona and with the frontier of France, by the incessant activity of the peasantry, who lay in wait for and frequently intercepted the convoys, the works advanced very slowly. On the 15th August, however, the breach of Fort Montjuich was declared practicable, and an assault was about to commence, when the besiegers were themselves assailed by a confused but formidable body, ten thousand strong, which appeared in their rear.¹

Aug. 15.
¹ Tor. i. 37.
38. Foy, iv.
172, 185.
Cabanes, ii.
62, 74. St-
Cyr, i. 40,
43.

49.
The siege is
raised by
the Span-
iards from
Tarragona.

This consisted, one half of regular troops, which the Count Caldagues had brought up from Tarragona, the other of Somatenes and Miquelets, with which he had augmented his force during its march along the coast of Catalonia. Count Theodore Lecchi, who was left in

charge of Barcelona, was in no condition to oppose their passage almost within range of the guns of the fortress; for the troops he commanded, hardly four thousand strong, were barely adequate to guard its extensive works, and the Miquelets, stationed on the heights which overhang the city, had carried their audacity to such a pitch, as not only to keep up a constant fire on the French sentinels, but even to make signals to the disturbed multitude in the streets to revolt. When this powerful force approached Gerona, the besieged made a general sally on the French lines, and with such vigour, that they penetrated into the batteries through the embrasures of the guns, spiked the heavy cannon, and set fire to the works; while Duhesme, with the great body of the besiegers' force, was sufficiently engaged in observing the enemy which threatened them from the outside. Finding it totally impossible to continue the siege, Duhesme broke up in the night, and, dividing his force into two columns, took the road for Barcelona. But here fresh difficulties awaited him: two English frigates, under the able direction of Lord Cochrane, cannonaded and raked the road by the sea-coast; overhanging cliffs prevented them from getting out of the destructive range; while the route by the mountains in the interior, besides being closed by the cannon of Hostalrich, was in many places steep and intersected by ravines, and beset by armed peasants, who from the rocks and woods above, kept up a destructive fire upon the troops beneath. In these circumstances the French general did not hesitate to sacrifice his artillery and stores; and thus lightened, he succeeded in fighting his way back, by mountain-paths on the summit of the cliffs which overhang the sea, amidst a constant fire, to Barcelona. In this disastrous expedition above two thousand men and thirty pieces of artillery, besides extensive stores, were lost; and at its conclusion, the French possessed nothing in Catalonia but the town of Barcelona and the citadel of Figueras.¹

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

¹ Cabanes, ii. 62, 81. Foy, iv. 172, 193. Tor. i. 37, 40. Nap. i. 85, 86. St-Cyr, 40, 47. Duhesme, 28, 39.

CHAP.
LIV.

1803.

50.

Universal
transports
in the
Peninsula.
Entry of
the Spanish
troops into
the capital.

Unbounded was the joy which these extraordinary successes in every part of Spain excited among its inhabitants. The variety of quarters in which they had arisen augmented their moral effect; it was supposed that popular energy was irresistible, when it had triumphed over its enemies at once in Andalusia and Aragon, Valencia and Catalonia. Abandoning themselves to a pleasing and allowable, though short-lived illusion, the Spaniards generally believed that the war was at an end; that the Castilian soil was finally delivered from its invaders; and that, relieved of all disquietude as to the defence of their own country, the only question was, when they should unite their victorious arms to those of the English, and carry the torrent of invasion across the Pyrenees into the French plains. These enthusiastic feelings rose to a perfect climax when the Spanish army from Andalusia entered the capital, in great pomp, with Castanos at their head, under a majestic triumphal arch, erected by the citizens to do honour to their arrival; and the whole of Spain, now delivered from the enemy, with the exception of the small portion occupied by the French army in Navarre and on the Ebro, joined in one universal chorus of national exultation and hatred of the invaders.¹

Aug. 25.
1 Tor. ii. 82,
85. Nap. i.
287. South.
ii. 287.

51.

Neglect of
any efficient
measures in
the general
exultation.

The press joined its influence to increase the excitement. Newspapers, warmly advocating the patriotic cause, were established at Madrid, Seville, Cadiz, and the other chief towns of Spain; and by their vehement declamation added to the general enthusiasm, as much as, by their extravagant boasting, they weakened the sense of the necessity of present exertion, and thus diminished the chance of bringing the contest in the end to a successful issue. But in the midst of the universal exultation, it was observed with regret that few vigorous or efficient measures were adopted by the many separate and independent juntas to prosecute the war against the enemy; a feeling increased by the calamitous issue of the revolt

Aug. 5.

of Bilbao, which had taken up arms upon receipt of the glorious news from Andalusia. The inhabitants, in the first instance, had succeeded in expelling the French garrison ; but being unsupported by any aid from Asturias or Galicia, the place was quickly recaptured, with great slaughter, by the French division of Merle. This was done by the express commands of Joseph Buonaparte, to whom this dangerous movement, in a town of such importance, so near his line of communication with France, had been the subject of no small disquietude ; and who boasted in his despatches, that “the fire of the insurrection at Bilbao had been extinguished in the blood of twelve hundred men.”¹

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

Aug. 16.

¹ South. ii.
287, 288.
Tor. ii. 82,
85. Nap. i.
287, 288.

Meanwhile events of a still more glorious and decisive character had liberated the kingdom of Portugal from its oppressors. In every phase of modern history it has been observed that Portugal has, sooner or later, followed the course of changes which public feeling had established in Spain ; and it was hardly to be expected that so great and heart-stirring an event as the resurrection of Castilian independence was not to find a responsive echo in a kingdom so closely neighbouring, and equally suffering under the evils of Gallic oppression. At a very early period, accordingly, symptoms of an alarming effervescence had manifested themselves in Portugal ; and Napoleon, appreciating more justly than Junot the probable course of events in that kingdom, strongly enjoined him to abandon the pompous proclamations in which he was endeavouring to win the affections of the people, and in good earnest to prepare for military operations.* Not

52.
Affairs of
Portugal,
and disarm-
ing of the
Spanish
troops in
that coun-
try.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

* “What is the use,” said he, “of promising to the Portuguese what you will never have the means of fulfilling? Nothing is more praiseworthy, without doubt, than to gain the affections of the people ; but it should never be forgotten, that the primary object of a general should be the safety of his soldiers. Instantly disarm the Portuguese ; watch over the soldiers who have been sent to their homes, in order that their chiefs may not form so many centres of insurrection in the interior. Keep your eye on the Spanish troops ; secure the important fortresses of Almeida and Elvas. Lisbon is too large and

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

June 5.

June 9.

¹ Lond. i.

117, 119.

South. ii. 41,

47. Nevis,

99, 109.

Foy, iv.

202, 210.

53.

Progress of
the insur-
rection.

anticipating, however, any immediate hostilities, he ordered him to detach four thousand men to support Bessières in Leon, and three thousand to co-operate with Dupont in Andalusia. But these detachments were rendered impossible by the pressure of events in Portugal itself. No sooner did the intelligence of the massacre at Madrid and the insurrection in Galicia reach Oporto, than the Spanish troops there, ten thousand strong, dispossessed the French authorities and marched off in a body towards Galicia, from whence, as already mentioned, they were forwarded to Leon in time to share in the disaster of Rio-Secco. The inhabitants, in the first moment of enthusiasm, installed insurrectionary authorities in room of the French ones who had been dispossessed. But after the departure of the Spanish troops, they became alarmed at their own boldness, and hastened to reinstate the tricolor flag, and to renew their protestations of fidelity to the French general at Lisbon. The moment, however, that he was apprised of the events at Oporto, Junot made preparations to effect the disarming of the Spanish troops in the capital; and with such secrecy and decision were his measures taken, that before they were well aware of the danger impending over them, they were all surrounded by greatly superior masses of French troops, and compelled to surrender. By this able stroke nearly five thousand Spanish troops were made prisoners, who might have been highly prejudicial to the French cause, if they had succeeded in withdrawing and forming the nucleus of an insurrection in the interior of the country.¹

The flame, however, excited by the glorious intelligence of popular successes, which daily came pouring in from all parts of Spain, could not so easily be suppressed. The students at Coimbra were among the first to take up arms;

populous a city; its population is necessarily hostile. Withdraw your troops from it; place them in barracks on the sea-coast. Keep them in breath—well disciplined, massed, and instructed, in order to be in a condition to combat the English army, which sooner or later will disembark on the coasts of Portugal.”—NAPOLÉON to JUNOT, *May 24*, 1808; Foy, iv. 198, 199.

the mountaineers of Tras-os-Montes speedily followed the example ; the tocsins were heard in their lovely hills, arms and torches gleamed in their vine-clad vales ; Algarves was speedily in open revolt ; the Alentejo was known to be ripe for insurrection, and, at the summons of Colonel Lopez de Souza, soon after took up arms. Encouraged by this revolt in the south, the inhabitants of Oporto a second time hoisted the standard of independence. A junta was speedily formed in that opulent city, which shared the supreme direction of affairs with the bishop, who early signalised himself by his zeal in the patriot cause. The insurrection in the province of Entre-Douro-e-Minho appeared so formidable, that Junot directed General Loison with a strong division to proceed against it from Almeida. But though he at first obtained some success, yet, as he advanced into the mountains, his communications were so completely cut off, and the insurrection appeared so formidable on all sides, that he was obliged to return to Lisbon by Celorica and Guarda, at which places he routed the peasantry with great slaughter.* In the south, the patriots gained considerable successes against the French detachments which endeavoured to penetrate into the Alentejo ; Abrantes was threatened by the insurgents of the valley of the Tezers ; the revolt at Bija was only extinguished by a bloody nocturnal assault of the town,† after a rapid march, by a French

June 11.

June 9.

* "In this expedition," says Thiébault, "we lost sixty men killed and one hundred and forty wounded : of the insurgents at least four thousand were killed or wounded on the different fields of battle."—THIÉBAULT, 155.

† The French general, Thiébault, boasts of this as a great exploit. "Twelve hundred Portuguese were put to death in the conflict : no quarter was shown to any one with arms in his hands." The town was afterwards set on fire and plundered ; and the worst military excesses were perpetrated against the wretched inhabitants. Kellermann shortly afterwards said, in a proclamation to the people of Alentejo—"Bija had revolted ; Bija is no more. Its guilty inhabitants have been put to the sword ; its houses delivered up to pillage and the flames. Thus shall all those be treated who listen to the counsels of a perfidious rebellion, and with a senseless hatred take up arms against us."—THIÉBAULT, 135, 136 ; SOUTHEY, i. 105.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

June 9.

¹ Thiébauld,
131, 165,
174. Nap.
i. 161, 163.
Nevis, i.
205.

brigade. Surrounded in this manner with embarrassments, Junot, after holding a council of war, the invariable sign of experienced difficulty, again despatched Loison with four thousand men to Abrantes. In his progress he had several severe actions with the Portuguese peasants, who were dispersed with great slaughter, but who evinced, by their courage in disaster, what materials were to be found among them for a formidable resistance in future times. He returned to Lisbon, having irritated the insurrection more by his cruelty than he had overawed it by his success.¹

54.
Operations
of Loison in
the Alentejo.
July 25.

His recall to the capital was rendered necessary by the progress of the insurrection elsewhere in the Alentejo, which had elected a junta, and established a sort of provisional government at Evora. Resolved to strike a decisive blow in that quarter, where the proximity of English succours from Gibraltar rendered the revolt peculiarly formidable, Junot fitted out a more powerful expedition, consisting of seven thousand infantry and twelve hundred horse, with eight guns, which was sent forth under the command of the sanguinary Loison. After dispersing several armed assemblages which strove in vain to obstruct his progress, this general came up with the main body of the insurgents posted in front of Evora. Ten thousand Portuguese peasants, and four thousand Spanish troops, who had advanced to support them from Badajoz, were there assembled, with twelve pieces of cannon. They were wholly unable, however, to withstand the shock of the French legions; at the first onset, the undisciplined peasantry fled from the terrible charge of their dragoons. The Spanish auxiliaries, seeing themselves left alone with the whole weight of the action on their hands, retired in haste, and were speedily thrown into disorder; and in the general confusion, the victorious troops entered the town, where a feeble resistance only was attempted, but an indiscriminate massacre immediately commenced. Neither age nor sex was spared: armed and unarmed

July 29.

were inhumanly put to the sword. It is the boast of the French historians, that while "they lost only two hundred and ninety, eight thousand were slain or wounded on the part of the insurgents."¹ Never, while Portuguese blood flows in the human veins, will the remembrance of that dreadful day be forgotten ; never will the French be any other than an object of execration to the descendants of those who perished in that inhuman massacre. But the cup of human suffering was full ; the hour of retribution was fast approaching ; and Loison was awakened from his fancied dream of security, and the further prosecution of his blood-stained progress towards Elvas, by intelligence that a BRITISH ARMY HAD APPEARED OFF THE COAST OF PORTUGAL.²

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

¹ Thiébauld,
165.

² Thiébauld,
131, 175.
Nap. i. 161,
165. South.
ii. 72, 155.
Nevis, i. 205.
Foy, iv.
246, 272.

Ever since the insurrection in the Peninsula had assumed a serious aspect, the English government had resolved upon sending out powerful military succours to its assistance, and at length bringing the strength of the two nations to a fair trial with land forces. Fortunately, a body of about ten thousand men was already assembled at Cork, having been collected there by the preceding administration, for the purpose of an expedition against South America—a proposed diversion of force, at a time when every sabre and bayonet was required in European warfare, which appears almost inconceivable ; unless, as Colonel Napier sarcastically observes, it was projected in imitation of the Romans, who sent troops to Spain when Hannibal was at their gates.³ The command of the expedition was given to SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY, whose great capacity had been evinced in the glorious fields of Indian warfare, and more recently in the easier conquest of the Danish militia. At the same time, General Miranda, the able adventurer, who had so long been concerned in projects for the separation of the Spanish colonies from the mother country, was given to understand that no countenance could now be shown by the British

55.
The English
cabinet
resolve on
sending suc-
cours to
Portugal.

³ Nap. i. 180.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Nap. i. 180.
Gurwood,
iv. 21, 24.56.
Strange sub-
stitution of
successive
commanders
to the Bri-
tish expedi-
tion.² Well. Desp.
by Gur-
wood, iv.
1, 3, 21,
22, 43.

government to any such designs. Two smaller divisions were soon afterwards prepared, and set sail from Ramsgate and Margate; and orders were sent to Sir John Moore, who, with twelve thousand men, had been sent to Goteborg to aid the King of Sweden in his heroic defence of his kingdom against Russia—an offer which that gallant monarch declined to accept*—to return forthwith to England, to form a further reinforcement of the armies in the Peninsula.¹

Though the direction of the Cork expedition, however, was intrusted to Sir Arthur, yet a senior officer, Sir Harry Burrard, was appointed to supersede him in the command shortly after he landed in Portugal; who again was to retain the supreme direction only until Sir Hew Dalrymple arrived from Gibraltar. Thus, in the most momentous period of the campaign, that in which the British troops were first to be engaged with the enemy, and when they were exposed to all the difficulty incident to a first landing on a hostile shore, they were to be intrusted successively to the command of three different generals—an arrangement as characteristic of the utter ignorance of military affairs which at that period prevailed in the British government, as the cheerful acquiescence of their first commander in the appointment of any officer, how unknown soever to fame, over his head, was of the single-hearted feeling and patriotic devotion which, in every age, have been found to be the accompaniments of real greatness.^{2†}

* The particulars of this expedition, and the causes of the disagreement with the Swedish monarch, will be found subsequently, chap. LXX, which treats of the war between Sweden and Russia.

† When Sir A. Wellesley received the command of the expedition at Cork, government gave him no reason to believe that he was to be superseded in the supreme direction of it. The first intimation he received of that intention was by a letter from Lord Castlereagh, dated 15th July 1808, which reached him when at sea, off Mondego Bay. Many officers, who had held the situations and achieved the victories which he had in India, would have at once resigned the command in which he was now reduced to so subordinate a station; but Sir Arthur acted otherwise. In answer to Lord Castlereagh, he said—"Pole and Burghersh have apprised me of the arrangements for the

The expedition, under the command of Sir Arthur, sailed from Cork on the 12th July, but the general himself preceded them in a fast-sailing frigate, and arrived at Corunna on the 20th. He immediately entered into communication with the junta of Galicia, from whom he received the distressing intelligence of the defeat at Rio-Seco; and was also made acquainted with the desire of the Spaniards in that quarter to receive no succours, except in arms, stores, and money, from England—a resolution of which it is hard to say, after such a disaster, whether it savoured more of magnanimous resolution or presumptuous confidence.* He found the opinion of all classes so unanimous in hatred of the French, “that no one dared to show that he was a friend to them.” Having supplied the junta, therefore, with two hundred thousand pounds in money, and assured them of the speedy arrival of extensive military stores, which in a great measure elevated their spirits after their late misfortunes, he proceeded to the southward to secure the main objects of the expedition—which were, in the first instance, an attack upon the Tagus; and afterwards, the detachment of such a force to the southward as might effectually secure Cadiz

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

57.

Sir A. Wellesley takes the command of the expedition, and arrives off Mondego Bay.

future command of the army. All that I can say on the subject is, that whether I am to command the army or not, or am to quit it, I shall do my best to insure its success; and you may depend on it that I shall not hurry the operations, or commence them one moment sooner than they ought to be commenced, in order that I may acquire the credit of the success. The government will determine for me in what way they will employ me hereafter, either here or elsewhere.” When asked by an intimate friend, after his return, how he, who had commanded armies of 40,000 men, received the Order of the Bath and the thanks of parliament, could thus submit to be reduced to the rank of a brigadier of infantry, he replied—“For this reason—I was nimuk-wallah, as we say in the East; I have ate of the King’s salt; and therefore I consider it my duty to serve with zeal and promptitude when or wherever the King or his government may think proper to employ me.” Nor was this disinterested and high-minded patriotism and sense of duty without its final reward. Inferior men would probably have thrown up the command, and rested on the laurels of Seringapatam and Assaye; but Wellington pursued the path of duty under every slight, and he lived to strike down Napoleon on the field of Waterloo.—See GURWOOD’S *Despatches*, August 1, 1808, vol. iv. 43; and *Blackwood’s Magazine*, xli. 714.

* “Notwithstanding the recent defeat of the Galician army, the junta here

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

from any attack by the French under Dupont. As the whole force of the expedition, when joined by the reinforcements from England, the corps of Sir John Moore, and that under General Spencer, which was off Cadiz, was estimated by government at thirty thousand men, it was thought that ample means existed to achieve both these objects. And as the primary condition of all successful military efforts, by a transmarine power, is the securing strong seaports as a base for the army, and a point of refuge in case of disaster, it is evident that the attainment of one or both of these objects was an indispensable preliminary to future operations. It was fortunate, however, that subsequent events rendered the dispersion of the English force, and the formation of a double base of operations, unnecessary. The British army was thereby concentrated in Portugal, where it had a strong country to defend, a docile population to work upon, and a central position on the flank of the French armies in Spain to maintain.¹

¹ Gurw. iv.
20, 33.
Lond. i.
114, 116.
Nap. i. 137.

58.

Arrival of
the British
troops at
Mondego
Bay, and
proclama-
tion by Sir
Arthur
Wellesley.

Sir Arthur Wellesley arrived at Oporto on the 26th, and proceeded on with the expedition to Mondego Bay, where he arrived on the 30th July. Having there received intelligence of the surrender of Dupont, he deemed all operations in Andalusia unnecessary; and having sent orders to General Spencer to come round from the Bay of Cadiz and join him, he determined upon an immediate landing—a bold and decisive resolution, considering that his own force did not exceed ten thousand men,* and Junot had fifteen thousand at

have not expressed any wish to receive the assistance of British troops; and they again repeated, this morning, that they could put any number of men into the field if they were provided with arms and money; and I think this disinclination to receive the assistance of British troops, is founded in a great degree on the objection to give the command of their troops to British officers.”—WELLINGTON to LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Corunna*, July 21, 1807; GURWOOD, iv. 27.

* The exact number was 9280 sabres and bayonets—about 10,000 men, including subalterns and officers. Spencer's corps was 4793 strong—about 5000 men.—GURWOOD, iv. 20.

Lisbon. He accordingly issued a proclamation to the people of Portugal, eminently descriptive of the principles of that glorious struggle which was now about to commence,* and which his own talents and constancy, and the resolution of the three nations, now banded together, ultimately brought to so glorious a termination. At first Sir Arthur thought of landing on the small peninsula of Peniche, about seventy miles to the north of the Rock of Lisbon; but though the anchorage was safe and practicable, it was commanded by the guns of the fort at its extremity, which was still in the hands of the enemy. He therefore, by the advice of Sir Charles Cotton, selected in preference Mondego Bay, where the whole fleet was assembled on the 31st July.¹

On the following morning the disembarkation commenced; and notwithstanding the obstacles arising from a strong west wind and heavy surf, which occasioned the swamping of several boats, and the loss of many lives, it was completed by the 5th, at which time General Spencer with his division came up, and was immediately put on shore. He had not received Sir Arthur's orders to join; but with great presence of mind, and the true military spirit, the moment he heard of Dupont's surrender he made sail for the Tagus, from whence he was sent forward by Sir Charles Cotton to the general point of disembarkation. On the evening of the 8th the united forces, thirteen thousand strong, bivouacked on the beach, and on the following morning the advanced guard moved forward, and commenced that memorable march which,² though

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Gurw. iv.
46. Nap. i.
190. Lond.
i. 190, 191.

^{59.}
Landing of
the army,
Aug. 1.

Aug. 5.

Aug. 8.
² Gurw. iv.
66, 67. Nap.
i. 190, 191.
Lond. 124,
125.

* "The English soldiers who land upon your shores do so with every sentiment of friendship, faith, and honour. The glorious struggle in which you are engaged is for all that is dear to man—the protection of your wives and children, the restoration of your lawful prince, the independence, nay, the existence of your kingdom, the preservation of your holy religion. Objects like these can only be attained by distinguished examples of fortitude and constancy. The noble struggle against the tyranny and usurpation of France will be jointly maintained by Portugal, Spain, and England; and, in contributing to the success of a cause so just and glorious, the views of his Britannic Majesty are the same as those by which you yourselves are animated."—A. WELLESLEY'S *Letter*.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

60.
March of the
British
troops to
Roliça.

often interrupted, was destined to be never finally arrested till the British cavalry passed in triumph from Bayonne to Calais.

The troops took the field in the highest spirits, and the most perfect state of discipline and equipment, confident in their leader, and not less confident in themselves ; for even at this early period of the war, it was the habit of the British soldiers, the habit bequeathed by centuries of glory, to admit of no doubt as to the issue of a combat. The Portuguese generals, who had six thousand men, were at first most extravagant in their demands, and would only consent to join the English upon condition that their troops should all be maintained from the British commissariat : a proposition so utterly unreasonable, when made by the natives of the country to their allies, just landed from their ships, that it thus early evinced, what the future progress of the war so clearly demonstrated, that jealousy of foreign co-operation, and aversion to foreign command, were nearly as strongly imprinted on their minds as hatred of the invaders. At length they consented to let General Freyre, with one brigade of infantry, fourteen hundred strong, and two hundred and fifty horse, remain with Sir Arthur, but the main body was positively prohibited to advance beyond Leyria on the road to Lisbon. The truth was, that they entertained a secret dread of the French troops, and, deeming the English totally inadequate to contend with them, they were unwilling to commit themselves by their side in a decisive affair. This defection of the native troops threw a chill over the British army, not from any doubt as to its ability to contend, single-handed, with the forces of Junot, but from the apprehensions which it inspired regarding the sincerity of their allies' professions of zeal against the common enemy. Sir Arthur, notwith-

It is seldom that a proclamation in the outset of a struggle so faithfully represents the real objects at issue in it ; still seldomer that it so prophetically and truly describes its ultimate result after many and long-continued disasters.—See GURWOOD, iv. 46.

standing, continued his advance, and was received everywhere by the common people with rapturous enthusiasm. His route lay by Alcobasa and Caldas, which latter place he reached on the evening of the 15th; Laborde, who commanded a division of five thousand French, which Junot, on the first alarm, had sent down to the coast, retiring as he advanced. A trifling skirmish occurred on the same day at Obidos, in which a few men were killed and wounded on both sides—memorable as the scene where British blood first flowed in the Peninsular war.¹

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

Aug. 15.

¹ Gurw. iv.
71, 80. Nap.
i. 198, 199.
Lond. i.
128, 130.

Meanwhile, Junot despatched orders in all directions to call in his detached columns, and concentrate all his forces for the protection of Lisbon: and Laborde, to give him time to complete his arrangements, resolved to stand firm at ROLIÇA—a little village situated at the southern extremity of a large oblong valley, running nearly north and south in the bosom of the Monte Junta, in the centre of which the village and Moorish tower of Obidos are situated. His force, five thousand strong, including five hundred horse and five guns, was stationed on a small elevated plateau in front of Roliça, at the upper end of the valley; and the hills on either side which shut it in were occupied by detachments, who, from amidst the rocky thickets and close underwood of myrtles and gum-cistus with which they were covered, threatened to keep up a heavy fire on the assailants. Sir Arthur divided his force into three columns: the right, consisting of the Portuguese infantry, and fifty horse under Colonel Trant, was directed to turn the mountains in the rear; while the centre, under Sir Arthur in person, attacked the plateau in front; and the left, under General Ferguson, was ordered to ascend the hills abreast of Obidos, and menace the French right by turning it in the mountains. As the centre advanced, preceded by nine guns, the corps on the right and left moved simultaneously forward in the hills, and the aspect

61.
Advance of
the British
to attack the
French
there.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Gurw. iv.
81, 84. Thié.
174, 180.
Foy, iv. 304,
315. Lond.
i. 130, 137.

of the body in the plain, nine thousand strong, moving majestically forward at a slow pace, in the finest order, opening and constantly closing again, when the array was broken by trees or houses in the line of its advance, strongly impressed the French soldiers, most of whom, like the British, were that day to make their first essay in real warfare against an antagonist worthy of their arms.¹

62.
Combat of
Roliça.

No sooner, however, was Laborde made aware of the risk he ran, if he remained in his present situation, of being outflanked on either side, than he fell swiftly back, in admirable order, and took up a second position much stronger than the former, in a little plain projecting into the valley higher up in the gorge of the pass, and shut in by close rocky thickets on either side. Thither he was rapidly pursued by the British—the right, centre, and left still moving in the same order. Seldom, in the whole progress of the Peninsular campaigns did war appear in a more picturesque and animating form than in the first engagement of the British soldiers. The loud shouts of the advancing columns, re-echoed by the surrounding hills and answered by as confident cheers from the enemy; the sharp rattle of the musketry among the woods, which marked the advance of the light troops as they drove before them the French *tirailleurs*; the curling wreaths of smoke which rose above the foliage, and were wafted by the morning air up the sides of the mountains, amidst the rays of a resplendent sun, formed a scene which resembled rather the mimic warfare of the opera stage, than the opening of the most desperate and sanguinary strife recorded in modern times. Such was the impetuosity of the attack, that the leading troops of the centre column, particularly the 29th regiment, forced their way through the gorge of the pass, and alone sustained the brunt of the enemy's fire before any of their comrades could come up to their assistance.² But the severity of the concentric discharges, not merely from the line in

² Thié.
Camp. de
Portugal,
173, 178.
Gurw. iv.
81, 84.
Lond. i.
130, 137.

front, but from the woods on either flank, was so great, that this gallant regiment, on first emerging into the little plain, wavered and broke, and their noble colonel, Lake,* as he waved his hat to lead them back to the charge, was killed.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

At that critical moment, however, the 5th and 9th came up, the 29th rallied, and the whole rushed forward with irresistible impetuosity upon the enemy. The French were obliged to give ground; the position was carried before it was menaced by the flank columns getting into its rear. Even then the enemy retired slowly and in compact order, keeping up a continued fire from the rear-guard, and exhibiting, equally with the advance of the assailants, the finest specimen of discipline and steadiness amidst all the confusion incident to a retreat over broken ground and through entangled thickets. In this brilliant affair the British lost five hundred men killed and wounded; the French six hundred, and three pieces of cannon: and as the former, though nearly triple the enemy upon the whole, were necessarily, from the narrow and rugged character of the ground, inferior, in the first instance at least, at the point of attack, it was hard to say to which of these two gallant nations the palm of courage and skill in this their first encounter in the Peninsula was to be awarded.¹† “*Cædes prope par utrinque fuit. . . .*

63.
Victory of
the British.

¹ Foy, iv.
304, 315.
Thiéb. 172,
174. Gurw.
iv. 81, 84.
Nap. i. 202,
205. Lond.
i. 130, 137.

* Son of Lord Lake, the hero of Indian war.

† In this, as in all the other actions of the war, the estimate of the numbers engaged is taken from a medium of the accounts on both sides; keeping in view the credit due to the different narratives, and the maxim *testimonia ponderanda sunt potius quam numeranda*. In this affair Sir Arthur estimates the French at 6000 men, Thiébault at 1900, Foy at 2500, Toreno at 5000, Thibaudau at 3500. — See THIÉB. 179; GURW. iv. 81; FOY, iv. 314; TOR. ii. 46; THIB. vi. 464. With the utmost wish to maintain an impartial view, and the greatest anxiety to avoid the influence of undue national partiality, it is impossible to study the French accounts of the actions in the Peninsular war, and particularly the numbers engaged and lost on the opposite sides, without feeling as great distrust of the fidelity of their facts, as admiration for the brilliancy of their descriptions and the talent of their observations; and arriving at the conclusion, that the two rival races of modern Europe have here, as elsewhere, preserved their never-failing characteristics; and that, if the palm for the eagle glance and the scientific reflection is frequently to be awarded to the writers of

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64.
The British
advance to
Vimeira.

Aug. 19.

Aug. 20.
1 Gurw. iv.
89, 93.
Lond. i. 137.
Foy, iv. 319.
320. Thiéb.
183, 190.

Hoc principium simul omenque belli, ut summae rerum prosperum eventum, ita haud sane incruentam ancipitisque certaminis victoriam Romanis portendit.”*

On the following morning orders were, in the first instance, issued for the continuance of the pursuit; and it was universally believed in the army that the enemy would be pursued, at the point of the bayonet, to the Rock of Lisbon. But at noon accounts arrived at headquarters of the arrival of Generals Anstruther and Ackland, with their respective brigades from England, off the coast; and, at the same time, that Junot had marched with all his disposable force out of Lisbon to bring matters to the issue of a decisive battle. Orders were, therefore, given to suspend the pursuit, and the line of march was directed by Lourinha to VIMEIRA, where headquarters were established on the 19th, in order to be near the sea-coast to take advantage of the reinforcements which were at hand. On the other hand, Junot, having by great exertion collected all his disposable force, and formed a junction at Torres Vedras with the retiring division of Laborde, found himself at the head of only fourteen thousand men—including, however, twelve hundred horse and six-and-twenty pieces of cannon: so heavily had the necessity of occupying many different points in a hostile country weighed upon and divided the twenty-five thousand which still remained at his disposal. On the 19th, General Anstruther’s brigade was landed, and on the 20th General Ackland’s; and these reinforcements raised the English army to sixteen thousand fighting men, besides Trant’s Portuguese and two regiments which were with Sir Charles Cotton off the Tagus.¹ It had, however, only eighteen guns, a hundred and eighty

the Celtic, the credit to honest and trustworthy narrative is in general due to the historians of the Gothic race.

* “The loss was nearly equal on both sides. This first and portentous engagement in the war presaged ultimate success, but was not less ominous of the desperate and sanguinary strife by which it was to be attained.” — LIVY, book xxi. c. 29.

British, and two hundred Portuguese horse; so that the superiority of infantry was nearly counterbalanced by the advantage of the enemy in the other arms of war.

Accurately informed of the nature of the country through which he was to advance, Sir Arthur proposed, on the 21st, to turn the strong position of Torres Vedras and gain Mafra with a powerful advanced-guard; while the main body was to move forward and seize the adjoining heights, so as to intercept the French line of retreat by Montachique to Lisbon. But Sir Harry Burrard, Sir Arthur's superior in command, who had now arrived off the coast, forbade any such hazardous operation, as endangering unnecessarily part of the army, when the force already in hand, and still more the powerful reinforcement approaching under Sir John Moore, rendered ultimate success a matter of certainty without incurring any such risk. The troops, therefore, were concentrated at Vimeira, and every arrangement made for a decisive battle on the morrow; while Junot, having mustered every man he could collect at Torres Vedras, set out soon after nightfall, and advanced, through tedious and difficult defiles, to within a league and a half of the British outposts, where he arrived by seven o'clock on the following morning.^{1*}

The ground occupied by the British in front of Vimeira,

* The road by which Sir Arthur proposed to have advanced from Vimeira to Mafra was near the sea-coast; that by which Junot actually came up from Torres Vedras to Vimeira was farther in the interior, but nearly parallel to the former. If, therefore, the design of the English general had been followed out, it would have brought the two armies into a position similar to that of the French and Prussians at Jena; they would have mutually turned and crossed each other in their march, and when they came to blows, Junot would have fought with his back to Oporto and his face to Lisbon, and Wellington with his back to Lisbon and his face to Oporto. But there would have been this essential distinction between the situation of the two armies, after having thus mutually passed each other—that Junot, cut off from all his reserves and supplies at Lisbon, would have been driven, in case of disaster, to a ruinous retreat through the insurgent and hostile mountains of the north of Portugal; whereas Wellington, backed by the sea, and having his fleet, containing powerful reinforcements, to fall back upon, would have fought in a comparatively advantageous position. There can be little doubt that, in these circumstances, defeat

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65.
Sir A. Wellesley's plans are overruled by Sir H. Burrard.

¹ Gurw. iv. 89, 93. Sir A. Wellesley's Evid. Ibid. iv. 181. Lond. i. 137, 142. Nap. i. 207, 209. Foy, iv. 319, 323. Thiéb. 183, 195.

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66.

Description
of the field
of battle of
Vimeira.Atlas,
Plate 51.Aug. 20.
1 Nap. i.
208, 212.
Thiéb. 192.
Foy, 324.
Gurw. iv.
93, 94.67.
Positions
taken up by
the two
armies.

though not clearly defined as a military position, was yet of considerable strength. The village of that name stands in a beautiful valley, running in a westerly direction from the interior towards the Atlantic, with the clear stream of the Maceira glittering over a pebbly bottom in its bosom, at the distance of about three miles from the sea. Hills rise on either side, especially on the northern, where a range of abrupt heights overhang the little plain. Over the summit of these runs the great road from Lisbon, through the hamlets of Fontaniel and Ventosa to Lourinha; while on the south-east is a kind of high table-land, covered in the ravines with myrtle, in the open part bare, over which the approach from Torres Vedras passes. A still loftier mass of heights overlooks these in the rear, and lies between them and the sea. On this rugged ground the British army lay in bivouac on the night of the 20th, the village of Vimeira being occupied by a strong detachment, and a few pickets stationed on the heights towards Torres Vedras, to give warning of the arrival of the enemy.¹

The first information of their approach was obtained at midnight, when a horseman in haste rode up to Sir Arthur with the account that Junot's whole army, said to be twenty thousand strong, was approaching. Shortly before sunrise, a cloud of dust was seen to arise in the direction

to Junot would have been attended with decisive consequences, and that Wellington was pursuing the plan of an able commander in throwing himself in this manner upon his enemy's line of communication without compromising his own; the great object and most decisive stroke which can be dealt out in war. At the same time it is not surprising that Sir Harry Burrard, who came in on the broadside of the affair, and could not be supposed to appreciate, so clearly as the commander actually engaged, the vital importance of not delaying an hour the proposed night-march between the sea and the hills, should have declined to plunge at once into so perilous an operation. His real error consisted in interfering at all with an important and delicate military operation, at a time when it was on the eve of execution by an able and experienced general; and the chief fault lay with the government in subjecting the army, at such a critical time, to the successive command of *three different generals*, who could not be supposed properly to enter into, or thoroughly understand, the operations in the course of execution at the time when they successively assumed the direction.

of the road leading from Torres Vedras to Lourinha—column after column were soon after discerned, through the morning dawn, to cross the sky-line of the opposite eminences, and it was evident that the French were bearing down in great force on the British left. After they descended from the heights on the opposite side, however, the direction of their march could no longer be distinctly traced, and the advanced guards were upon the English videttes almost as soon as they were perceived. But Sir Arthur, concluding from the line of the road on which they were moving, that the left was the principal object of attack, had meanwhile ordered four brigades successively to cross the valley from the heights on the south to those on the north of the stream, and before the action began that part of the line was secure. Observing the rapid concentration of troops on the English left, the French accumulated their forces on their own right. General Laborde commanded a column, six thousand strong, which advanced against the centre; while Brennier, with his division of five thousand, moved against the left of the British; and the reserve under Kellermann, with the cavalry led by Margaron, in all about three thousand men, was ready to support any point where their aid might be required. Generals Ferguson, Nightingale, and Bowes commanded the English left. Ackland united the left to the centre, which, strongly grouped together in the valley in front of Vimeira, was formed of the brigades of Anstruther and Fane; while, on the right, Hill's brigade, in a massy column, rested on the summit of the heights which formed the southern boundary of the valley.¹

The action began with the head of Laborde's column, which, advancing with the utmost impetuosity against the British centre, first came in contact with the 50th regiment. Its light troops were driven in with great vigour, and the French mounted the hill to the south-east of Vimeira with loud cries and all the confidence of victory. But when they reached the summit, they were

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¹ Lond. i.
140, 142.
Nap. i. 208,
212. Foy,
iv. 324, 333,
Thiéb. 192,
194. Gurw.
iv. 93, 94.

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Battle of
Vimeira.
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shattered by a well-directed fire from the artillery, disposed along the front of the English line on the edge of the steep; and their troops were arrested by the effect of the shrapnel-shells, then first used against them, which, after striking down by a point-blank discharge whole files of soldiers in front, exploded with all the devastation of bombs in the rear. While yet breathless with their ascent, they received a discharge within pistol-shot from the 50th, and were immediately charged with the bayonet with such vigour, that ere the rush took place they broke and fled.* At the same time Fane's brigade repulsed, with equal success, an attack on the village of Vimeira in the valley, and, after a desperate contest, seven pieces of cannon were taken in that quarter; while the few horsemen with the army who were there stationed broke forth among the retreating lines with great execution. But pursuing their advantage too far, they were assailed when in disorder, by the superior troops of the French cavalry, and almost cut to pieces. Kellermann's reserve of grenadiers now advanced to the attack, but these choice troops, though at first successful, were, after a desperate struggle, repulsed in disorder by the 43d.¹

¹ Gurw. iv.
93, 95.
Thiéb. 195.
Foy, ii. 230.

69.
Desperate
conflict on
the left.

While these successes were achieved in the centre, a most severe conflict was going on in the hills to the left, where the road to Lourinha traverses the steep heights to the north of Vimeira. Brennier and Solignac commanded in that quarter; and as Junot perceived that their attack

* Colonel Walker, of the 50th regiment, finding his battalion, which had only 700 bayonets in the field, unable, by a direct resistance in front, to withstand the assault of above 2000 men in column, whom Laborde led on, most skilfully drew it up obliquely to their advance, with the left, against which they were directed, thrown back. The effect of this was to expose the flank as well as front of the French column to the British fire, almost every shot of which told on their crowded ranks, while a small number only could return the discharge, and the numerous ranks in rear were perfectly useless. When the command to charge was given, the British regiment in line came down in compact order on the French column, partly on its front and partly on its flank, and in the attempt to deploy and form line to withstand the levelled steel, they almost unavoidably broke and fled. This method of resisting the French attack in column, was very frequently afterwards employed by Wellington, and

did not at once prove successful, they were supported in the end by the whole reserve of infantry under Kellermann. The French, under Solignac, preceded by a cloud of light troops, came on with the utmost impetuosity, and first encountered Ferguson's brigade on the summit of the ridge. Several terrible discharges of musketry were exchanged between these dauntless antagonists with extraordinary execution on both sides, as the firearms, almost within pistol-shot, told with murderous effect on the dense array of either line. At length, however, the three English regiments which had hitherto singly maintained the combat, (the 40th, 36th, and 71st,) being supported by three others, levelled their bayonets, and rushing forward with irresistible impetuosity, drove the French line headlong down the steep, with the loss of all its artillery. So dreadful was the execution by the bayonet on this occasion, that the whole front line of one of the French regiments went down like grass before the scythe, and three hundred men lay dead as they had stood in their ranks.¹

¹ Sir A. Wellesley's Despatch. Gurw. iv. 93, 95. Thiéb. 195, 201. Foy, ii. 330, 339. Jom. iii. 71, 72.

Brennier's brigade, however, still remained—and with these troops Junot made a gallant attempt to regain the day. Forming his men under cover of the rocks and woods which concealed them from the enemy, Brennier, with his columns in admirable order, came suddenly upon the victorious British as they were lying on the ground, in loose array in the valley, reposing after their success, and, suddenly charging, drove them back, and retook the

^{70.}
Defeat of
the French.

always with the same success. It can hardly fail of proving successful, if the part of the line menaced by the head of the column can be relied on to withstand the shock till the fire of the other parts on the flank of the column has produced the desired effect; but unless this is the case, the column will break the line, and, deploying against the oblique line, now itself taken in flank, soon drive it off the field. Of all the European troops, the British are the only ones by whom this hazardous, but, if successful, decisive mode of resisting the attack in column was habitually practised. General Loison, who witnessed this able movement, desired, after the Convention of Cintra, to be introduced to Colonel Walker, and, with true military frankness, congratulated him on the steadiness and talent with which he had, with a battalion line, withstood the formidable attack of the French column.—See SCOTT'S *Napoleon*, vi. 235.

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guns. But his triumph was only momentary. The surprised troops rallied upon the heights in their rear, to which they had been driven, and, facing about, poured in a destructive volley upon their pursuers; and immediately charging back again with a loud shout, not only again captured the artillery, but made Brennier himself prisoner, and drove the enemy a second time in utter confusion down the hill. So complete was the rout, that Solignac's brigade was driven off the ground in a different direction from Brennier's; the former general was desperately wounded, and his troops would all have been made prisoners had not an unexpected order from Sir Harry Burrard obliged Ferguson to halt in the midst of his success. The broken French upon this rallied and reunited, and the whole fell back to the heights on the opposite side of the valley, considerably to the north of the ground from which they had commenced their attack in the morning—leaving in the hands of the victors thirteen pieces of cannon, a large quantity of ammunition, and four hundred prisoners, besides two thousand who had fallen on the field. The English had to lament the loss of nearly eight hundred men in killed and wounded.¹

¹ Sir A. Wellesley's Despatches, Gurw. iv. 93, 96. Nap. i. 212, 216. Lond. i. 142, 144. Foy, iv. 330, 339. Thiéb. 195, 201. Jom. iii. 71, 72. Scott, vi. 234, 235.

71. Sir A. Wellesley proposes to follow up the victory.

Like the Allied sovereigns at Austerlitz, Junot had made his attack by a flank-march directed in echelon athwart the front, against the left of the British in position; and his disaster, like theirs, was in a great measure owing to that cause, which brought his different columns not simultaneously, but at successive periods into action. Sir Arthur Wellesley had as decisive success in his power as Napoleon at the close of the day; for not only had the three brigades under Hill on the right, and the Portuguese, never fired a shot, but two other brigades had suffered very little. The entire army was in excellent order and the most enthusiastic spirits; the shouts of victory, the triumphant clang of trumpets, was heard along their whole line; and from the direction which the broken French had taken after their defeat, they were entirely

cut off from the retreat to Lisbon. On the other hand, the British, who had repulsed their oblique attack, and driven them off in a north-easterly direction, were masters of the great road by Torres Vedras to the capital. This situation of things promised the greatest results to immediate activity. Sir Arthur was fully aware of the vast advantages thus placed within his grasp, and prepared, by immediate and decisive operations, instantly to turn them to the best account. He proposed with the five brigades on the left, about nine thousand men, and the Portuguese, five thousand more, to follow up his success against the retreating columns of the enemy, now blended together in great confusion on the opposite heights, and drive them as far as possible back in a north-easterly direction over the Sierra da Baragueda, away from the capital; while the brigades of Hill, Anstruther, and Fane, six thousand strong, should make straight for the defile of Torres Vedras, which lay open to the south, and thence push on to Montachique, and cut off all retreat on the part of the French to Lisbon. Considering that Junot had lost two-thirds of his artillery, and great part of his reserve park of ammunition, there can be no doubt that this operation would have proved successful, and that not only would Lisbon have fallen an easy prey to the victors, but Junot himself, driven to an eccentric and disastrous retreat through an insurgent and mountainous country, almost destitute of roads, would have been too happy to find shelter under the cannon of Almeida with half his forces.¹

Orders to this effect were already given, and the army was preparing to execute them, when the assumption of the command by Sir Harry Burrard at once arrested the career of victory. That officer, who had arrived on the field with his staff early in the day, had with generous forbearance declined to take the command from Sir Arthur during the battle; but after it was over, considering the responsibility of ulterior operations as resting on himself, he gave orders to halt at all points, and remain

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¹ Gurw. iv. 99, and Evidence, iv. 207. Lord Burghersh's Evidence, Ib. iv. 214. Lond. i. 145, 146.

72.
But is prevented by Sir Harry Burrard.

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in position at Vimeira till the expected reinforcements under Sir John Moore joined the army. Sir Arthur, in the strongest terms, and with military frankness, represented to his superior general, on the field of battle, the inestimable importance of instantly following up the beaten enemy, driving him still further to the north-east, and interposing between his disordered columns and the strong defiles of Torres Vedras, the real gates of the capital. But all was in vain. Sir Harry Burrard, though a respectable veteran, had none of the vigour or daring requisite for decisive success; he belonged to the old school, by whom one battle was considered sufficient work for one week, and deemed it imprudent, when the artillery-horses were fatigued, and the cavalry destroyed, to hazard anything by a further advance, the more especially as ultimate success without any risk was certainly to be looked for upon the arrival of Sir John Moore's division. He persisted, accordingly, in his resolution not to move from his ground: the precious moments were lost, never to be regained; the disordered French, seeing with astonishment that they were not pursued, re-formed their ranks. Junot, that very night, by a forced and circuitous march, regained the defiles of Torres Vedras, and secured his retreat to the capital; while Sir Arthur, seeing the opportunity was lost, and concealing the bitterness of his disappointment under an affected gaiety, said to the officers of his staff, "Gentlemen, nothing now remains to us but to go and shoot red-legged partridges."¹*

Sir Harry Burrard's tenure of the supreme direction of affairs was of short duration. Early on the morning

¹ Sir A. Wellesley's Despatches. Gurw. iv. 99, and Evid. Ibid. iv. 207, 208. Lord Burghersh's Evidence, Ibid. iv. 214. Lond. i. 145, 146. Nap. i. 216, 217.

* Lord Burghersh, in his evidence before the court of inquiry, declared,—“I recollect, that on the evening of 21st August, Sir Arthur Wellesley urged Sir H. Burrard to advance, giving as a reason that his right was some miles nearer to Torres Vedras than the enemy; that he had four brigades that had not been engaged; that Torres Vedras was the pass by which the enemy must retire to Lisbon, and that, in his opinion, by that movement no part of the French army could reach Lisbon.”—*Evidence, Court of Inquiry*; GURWOOD, iv. 214.

of the 22d, Sir Hew Dalrymple arrived from Gibraltar, and immediately landed and assumed the command; so that within thirty hours a pitched battle had been fought, a decisive operation rejected, and three successive commanders called to the direction of the army. After consulting with Sir Arthur and Sir Harry, and getting the best information he could, he resolved to advance on the 23d against Junot, now in position at Torres Vedras, and orders to that effect had already been issued, when information was brought that a French flag of truce had reached the outposts. It proved to be General Kellermann, with a proposal from Junot for a suspension of arms, with a view to the evacuation of Portugal.¹

In truth, the situation of Junot since the battle of Vimcira had been such, that he had no longer any alternative to adopt. Early on the morning of the 22d, a council of war was held at Torres Vedras; and the proverb almost invariably holds good, that such a council never fights. The French generals were aware that a powerful reinforcement, under Sir John Moore, was on the eve of landing; that a city containing three hundred thousand agitated and hostile citizens was in the rear; that the forts and points of defence which it contained were hardly tenable against an army of thirty thousand English troops; and that to attempt a retreat through Portugal, intersected as it was by mountain torrents and almost inaccessible ridges, in the face of an insurgent population, and pursued by a victorious army, could not fail to be attended with the greatest disasters. In these circumstances, it was unanimously agreed that enough had been done for the honour of the imperial arms, and that to endeavour to obtain by negotiation a convention which might restore the army to the French soil, and ultimately to renewed operations in the north of Spain, was the most prudent course which could be adopted.² General Kellermann was selected for this delicate mission, and it could not have been intrusted to more

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73.

An armistice is concluded.

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¹ Gurw. iv.
104. Nap. i.
220. Foy,
iv. 340.

74.

Reasons which led to an armistice on both sides.

² Nap. i.
220, 225.
Gurw. iv.
105, 116.
Thiéb. 204,
206. Foy,
iv. 344.

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¹ *Ante*, ch. x.
§ 27.

² *Ante*, ch.
xxxi. § 93.

skilful hands. Enjoying a European reputation, not less from the glory of his father, the hero of Valmy,¹ than from his own invaluable achievements on the field of Marengo,² he was at the same time possessed of all the tact and finesse in which the French diplomatists excel all those of Europe, with the exception of those of Russia.

75.
Convention
of Cintra.

Perceiving from some hints dropped in conversation by the English general, Sir Hew Dalrymple, and his brother officers, who were not aware that he understood their language, that they were far from possessing the confidence of Sir Arthur Wellesley in the results to be expected from immediate and decisive operations, he began by representing, in the most favourable colours, the strength of the French army and the magnitude of its resources, especially from the aid of the sailors and artillery of the Russian fleet, as well as the resolution of its commander, whom he described as determined to bury himself under the ruins of Lisbon rather than submit to any conditions derogatory to the honour of the imperial arms. Having thus effected his object of producing an impression as to the protracted and doubtful nature of the contest which awaited them, if hostilities were persisted in, he gradually opened the real object of his mission, which was the conclusion of an armistice preparatory to a convention for the evacuation of Portugal. The terms proposed were, that the French army should not be considered as prisoners of war, but be sent back to France by sea, with their artillery, arms, and baggage; that their partisans in the country should not be disquieted on account of their political opinions, but, so far as they desired it, be permitted to withdraw with their effects; and that the Russian fleet should remain in Lisbon as in a neutral harbour. The two first conditions were acceded to without any difficulty by all the English generals; but Sir Arthur Wellesley strenuously opposed the last, and it was at last agreed to refer it to the decision of Sir

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Charles Cotton, who positively refused to agree to it. Foiled in this attempt to extricate the Russian fleet from their awkward situation, the French general was obliged to leave them to their fate, and a separate convention was some days afterwards concluded with Admiral Siniavin, the Russian commander, in virtue of which the whole fleet was to be conducted to England and retained in deposit till the conclusion of a general peace, and the officers and crews to be transported to Russia at the expense of the British government, without any restriction as to their future service.¹*

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¹ Nap. i.
220, 229.
Gurw. iv.
105, 116,
117. Foy,
iv. 343, 345.
Lond. i.
152, 160.
Thieb. 204,
209.

Posterity will scarcely be able to credit the universal burst of indignation with which the intelligence of this convention was received, both in the Peninsular nations and the British islands. Totally incapable of appreciating the real importance of the acquisition of Portugal at one blow on the future progress of the war, the inhabitants of all these countries united in condemning a treaty which was thought to step between them and the glory which they had earned, or the vengeance which was their due. The Portuguese, though they had been in no hurry to confront the invader in the field, and were strangers to the glories of Roliça and Vimeira, were yet loud in their complaints of the capitulation which had been granted; and bitterly inveighed against the clauses which, under the specious veil of protecting private property, in effect gave the public robbers the means of securely carrying off the stores of private and ecclesiastical plunder which they had amassed. The Spaniards re-echoed the same

76.
Senseless
clamour in
England on
the subject.

* The Convention of Cintra excited such a clamour at the time, both in the British and Peninsular nations, that a short summary of its leading provisions is indispensable. It was provided that the French should evacuate the forts of Lisbon and whole kingdom of Portugal, and be conveyed to France, with their artillery and sixty rounds of ammunition to each gun, and with liberty to serve again; all other artillery, arms, and ammunition, to be delivered up to the British army and navy; the French army to carry with them all their equipments, the cavalry their horses, and the individuals their property; the sick and wounded to be intrusted to the care of the British government, and returned to France when convalescent: the fortresses of Elvas, Almeida, Peniche, and Palmela to be delivered up as soon as British detachments could

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sentiments; and, with some appearance of reason, contrasted the surrender of Dupont's corps at Baylen with the unhappy convention, which tended only to remove the French army from a situation where it was detached from the remainder of the imperial forces, and ran the most imminent hazard of being made prisoners of war, to one where it might be more advantageously and securely employed in forming the right wing of the army with which the invasion of the Peninsula was again to be attempted. Roused to the very highest pitch of enthusiasm by the early and decisive successes which had attended their arms—panting for their full share of the glories which had been won—and nothing doubting that an unconditional surrender would immediately follow, and that they should soon see a marshal of France and twenty thousand men arrive as prisoners of war at Spithead, the British people abandoned themselves to unbounded vexation when the capitulation was announced which was to convey them, without that last disgrace being incurred, to swell the invader's ranks at Rochfort and l'Orient.¹

¹ South. ii.
272, 274.
Tor. ii. 57,
58. Gurw.
iv. 235, 239.

77.
A court of
inquiry is
held, and
its results.

In vain were the Park and Tower guns fired on this as on other triumphs of our arms; the public voice refused to join in the acclamations; the press, both in the metropolis and the provinces, loudly condemned the convention as more disgraceful than even those of the Helder and Closter-seven, where the British troops had been constrained to sue for terms of accommodation. Many of the public journals refused to stain their pages by the

be sent forward to take possession of them; all subjects of France to be protected who are domiciliated in Portugal; all their property of every description to be guaranteed to the French citizens in Portugal; no inhabitants of that country to be disquieted on account of their political conduct or opinions; the Spanish troops in the custody of the French armies to be liberated. By the supplementary convention in regard to the Russian fleet, it was stipulated that it should be conveyed to Great Britain, to remain in deposit with all its stores till six months after the conclusion of a general peace: and the officers and men meanwhile to be returned to Russia, without any restriction as to their future service.—See Gurwood, iv. 113, 117.

obnoxious articles, and others appeared with their columns in mourning, as in a season of national calamity; public meetings were held in most parts of England, to express the general indignation, and call for the punishment of the guilty parties; and to such a length did the outcry proceed, that it was deemed indispensable by government to consent to a court of inquiry. Such a court was accordingly appointed, consisting of highly respectable, though somewhat antiquated officers, who, after a full investigation, arrived at the conclusion that, considering the extraordinary manner in which three successive commanders had been invested with the direction of the army after the battle of Vimeira, it was not surprising that that victory had not been more vigorously followed up; that unquestionable zeal and firmness had been exhibited by all the three generals; and that, in the whole circumstances of the case, no further proceedings were necessary. The general odium attached to Sir Hew Dalrymple, as the senior officer in command at the time the convention was signed; though it was evident that the chief fault in the case, if there was fault at all, lay with Sir Harry Burrard, as the commander-in-chief when the decisive march to Torres Vedras was declined. Such was the universal discontent, that neither of these two generals, notwithstanding the acquittal of the court-martial, were again employed in any considerable command in the British army; and it required all the family influence and early celebrity of the hero of Assaye and Vimeira to save the future conqueror of Napoleon from being cut short on the threshold of his career, for no fault whatever of his own, by the very people upon whom he had conferred an inestimable benefit.^{1*}

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

¹ Court of Inquiry, Gurw. iv. 235, 239. South. ii. 272, 276. Lond. i. 157, 165. Tor. ii. 57, 58.

The English people in general arrive in the end at

* At the meeting of parliament, the public thanks of both Houses were voted to Sir Arthur Wellesley for the battle of Vimeira. But he narrowly escaped, notwithstanding all his glory and the influence of his brother, Marquis Wellesley, the obloquy consequent on the Convention of Cintra.—See GURWOOD, iv. 239, 241.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

78.

Expedience
of the Con-
vention at
that junc-
ture.¹ *Ante*, ch.
xxxix. § 79.

more sober and rational opinions on political subjects than any other of whom history has preserved a record. But they are prone, in the first instance, in a most extraordinary degree, to delusions or frenzies, which almost amount to national insanity. The cruel injustice with which they persecuted Sir Robert Calder for having gained a victory, perhaps the most momentous in its ultimate consequences, and most vital to the safety of the country of any recorded in the British annals,¹ is an instance of such delusion; the universal and senseless clamour raised about the Convention of Cintra, an example of such frenzy. There cannot be a doubt, not only of its expedience at the juncture when it was concluded, but of its having been the means of acquiring the basis on which the whole future successes of the British arms were rested. Having missed, perhaps through an excess of caution, the opportunity of following up, according to Sir Arthur Wellesley's advice, the brilliant success of Vimeira on the evening of the battle, nothing remained but to close with the highly advantageous offer, which at once liberated Portugal from its oppressors, and secured the best possible base for future operations. The sea, sterile and unproductive if in the rear of the forces of any other power, is the source of strength and vigour to the British armies; to them every tide is fraught with plenty, every wind wafts the sinews of war on its gales. Thenceforward Lisbon became the great *place d'armes* to the English army, the stronghold of defence in periods of disaster, the reservoir from whence all the muniments of war were drawn in prosperous times. To have missed the opportunity of at once, and in the outset of the campaign, acquiring such a position, for the vain glory of possibly compelling a French corps and marshal, after a bloody siege of several months' duration, to lay down their arms in Lisbon, Elvas, or Almeida, would have been sacrificing the solid advantages of war for its empty honours. The restoration of twenty thousand defeated

and dispirited soldiers to the standards of the enemy, was a matter of little consequence to a sovereign who had seven hundred thousand disciplined men at his command; the loss of a whole kingdom, of a chain of strong fortresses, of an admirable harbour, of ten sail of the line to his ally, of the *prestige* of victory to himself, was a calamity of a very different description.¹

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

¹Thiéb. 472.

Napoleon showed clearly in what light he viewed the acquisition of such advantages to the French arms, when, in the outset of his career, he stipulated only, in return for his glorious successes in the Maritime Alps, the cession of the Piedmontese fortresses from the cabinet of Turin;² and when, after the triumph of Marengo, he at once allowed the Austrian army, cut off from the Hereditary States and thrown back on Genoa, to retire unmolested to the Mincio, provided only they ceded Alessandria, Tortona, and the other strongholds in the west of Lombardy, as the reward of victory.³ On the present occasion he felt quite as strongly the vast importance of the fortified basis for future operations, so advantageously situated on the edge of the sea, and on the flank of the Peninsular plains, which had thus, in the very outset of their career, been wrested from him by the British arms: had the advantage been gained by himself, he would have made Europe ring from side to side with the triumph which had been achieved. As it was, he manifested the utmost displeasure at the generals who were engaged in the Convention of Cintra; and Junot, in particular, never afterwards regained his confidence or esteem. "I was about," said he, "to send Junot to a council of war; but happily the English got the start of me by sending their generals to one, and thus saved me from the pain of punishing an old friend."⁴ *

79.
Napoleon's
views on
that sub-
ject.

² *Ante*, ch.
xx. § 67.

³ *Ante*, ch.
xxxi. § 97.

⁴Thiéb. 472.
D'Abr. xii.
64, 102.

* "He," says the Duchess of Abrantes, "to whom the whole life of Junot was devoted, alone viewed in a false light the Convention of Cintra. Everything which was not a triumph he regarded as a defeat; and, like Augustus, he never ceased to demand his legions from all those who had not succeeded in

CHAP.
LIV.1808.
80.

Disgraceful
revelations
which are
made at
Lisbon of
the plunder
by all ranks
in the
French
army.
Sept. 5.

Many causes conspired to make the execution of the Convention of Cintra a matter of great difficulty to all the contracting parties. The French troops, from the time it was concluded, were constantly kept together in masses, encamped on the heights and forts, with cannon directed down the principal streets which led to their bivouacs. Notwithstanding these formidable preparations, and the proximity of the British forces, who, early in September, approached close to Lisbon, it was found to be impossible to prevent the indignation of the populace from finding vent in detached acts of aggression. Crowds of infuriated peasants incessantly thronged into the city, decorated with ribbons, vociferating shouts of triumph, and bearing on their hats the favourite motto, "Death to the French!" At night the discharge of fire-arms or explosion of petards was heard on all sides, occasioned by skirmishes between the enraged populace and the French advanced posts. Loison, whose unnecessary cruelty had rendered him in an especial manner the object of universal hatred, was menaced by a serious attack; while other generals, especially Travot, who had executed their orders with humanity, were not only unmolested, but traversed the streets alone in perfect safety: a fact, as Colonel Napier justly observes, extremely honourable to the Portuguese, and conclusive as to the misconduct of the obnoxious officers.¹

But these difficulties, great as they were, soon sank into insignificance when compared with those which

¹ Nap. i. 231.
Nevis, ii.
240. Thiéb.
239.

conducting his young conscripts, hardly emerged from boyhood, to victory."—
D'ABRANTÈS, xii. 64, 102.

The Duke of Wellington's opinion on the expedience of the Convention of Cintra was equally clearly expressed. "If we had not negotiated," said he, "we could not have advanced before the 30th, as Sir John Moore's corps was not ready till that day. The French would by that time have fortified their positions near Lisbon, which, it is probable, we could not have been in a situation to attack till the end of the first week in September. Then, taking the chance of the bad weather depriving us of the communication with the fleet of transports and victuallers, and delaying and rendering more difficult and precarious our land operations, which after all could not have been effectual to cut

arose from the discoveries made, in the course of the preparations for the embarkation, of the extent to which public and private plunder had been carried by the French army. Sir John Hope, who had been appointed governor of Lisbon, took possession of the castle of Belem on the 10th September, and by his firm and vigorous conduct soon reduced the unruly multitude to some degree of order. But the complaints which daily arose as to the enormous quantity of plunder which the French were about to carry off, under pretence of its being their private property, continually increased, and became the occasion of much more serious embarrassment. The museum, the treasury, the public libraries, the church plate, the arsenals of the state, equally with the houses of individuals, had been indiscriminately ransacked; most of the valuable articles left in the royal palace by the flying Regent were packed up and ready for embarkation. All the money in the public offices was laid hold off; even the sums lying in the *Deposito Publico*, a bank where they were placed to await the decision of the courts of law on matters of litigation, were appropriated by these insatiable hands. Junot went so far as to demand five vessels to take away his personal effects. Matters at length rose to such a height that the British commanders felt themselves called upon to interfere; and the commissioners to whom the execution of the convention had been intrusted, with much difficulty,¹ and after the most vio-

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

81.

Enormous
extent of
the plunder
the French
superior
officers en-
deavoured
to carry off.

¹ Nap. i. 232,
234. Nevis,
ii. 240, 249.
Foy, iv. 356,
Thiébaud,
239.

off the retreat of the French across the Tagus into Alentejo, I was clearly of opinion, *that the best thing to do was to consent to a convention, and allow them to evacuate Portugal.* The details of the Convention, and the agreement to suspend hostilities, is a different matter; to both of them I have very serious objections. I do not know what Sir Hew Dalrymple proposes to do, or is instructed to do; but, if I were in his situation, I would be in Madrid with 20,000 men in less than a month from this time."—SIR A. WELLESLEY to CHARLES STUART, Esq., 1st September 1808; GURWOOD, iv. 121. Here is the clearest evidence of the advantageous results of obtaining so early in the campaign the great fortified base of Portugal for the British operations. Sir Arthur in a month proposed to have had twenty thousand men in Madrid! He is a bold man, who, on such a subject, dissents from the concurring opinions of Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

82.

Great part
of the plun-
der is wrest-
ed from the
French.
Sept. 12.

lent altercation, succeeded in putting a stop to the disgraceful spoliation.

These high functionaries, General Beresford and Lord Proby, acted with such firmness, that not only was the progress of the plunderers arrested, and much which had been seized from the public offices restored, but a general order was extorted from the French commander, enjoining the immediate restitution of all the property which had been taken from public or private establishments within twenty-four hours. Yet so inveterate was the habit of spoliation in all ranks of the French army, from the highest to the lowest, that within a few hours after this order was issued, Colonel Delambis, Junot's chief aide-de-camp, carried off the Prince Regent's horses; a valuable collection of private pictures was seized on by Junot himself; and two carriages belonging to the Duke of Sussex were appropriated, which were only got back by the threat of detaining the marshal himself as a hostage. At length, however, after vehement discussion, and a complete revelation of that extraordinary system of public and private plunder which had been so long and disgracefully the characteristic of the French army, the greater part of this ill-gotten spoil was wrested from the invaders. On the 15th, the first division of the fleet sailed from the Tagus; by the 30th the whole were embarked: shortly after, Elvas and Almeida were given up in terms of the capitulation; and before the middle of October, not a French soldier remained on the soil of Portugal. Twenty-two thousand men were disembarked on the coasts of France; thirty thousand had been placed, from first to last, by Napoleon under the orders of Junot; the remainder had perished of fatigue, disease, fallen in the field, or voluntarily enlisted in the British army.¹ The convention,* though loudly disapproved of by the British

Sept. 15.

Sept. 30.

¹ Nap. i.
232, 234.
South. i.
240, 249.
Nevis, ii.
230, 249.
Foy, iv.
356, 364.
Thiéb. 239.

* "That same public opinion, under the influence of a free constitution, which condemned the Convention of Cintra, enjoined to its government its faithful execution. In so far as depended on the English government, the convention was executed with honourable fidelity."—Foy, iv. 356.

people, was, on the admission of the French themselves, carried into execution with scrupulous good faith by the government.

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LIV.

1808.

The subordinate arrangements consequent on the decisive events which had in this manner liberated Portugal were soon concluded. Such was the violence of the groundless clamour which arose in England on the subject of the convention, that all the generals engaged in it, Sir Hew Dalrymple, Sir Harry Burrard, and Sir Arthur Wellesley, were obliged to return to Great Britain; where, as already mentioned, their conduct in relation to it became the subject of deliberation to a court of inquiry, which, after a long and impartial investigation, returned a report, distinguished by little ability, which, in substance, found that no blame could be attached to any of these officers. Meanwhile the army, deprived in this way for a time of the guidance of the brave leader who had in so glorious a manner led it to victory, was placed under the command of SIR JOHN MOORE,* an officer whose gallant conduct in Egypt, as well as his admirable skill in the training and disciplining of his troops, had already rendered him distinguished among all his brethren in arms. His division had landed and joined the other troops at Lisbon; while another corps, fifteen thousand

83.
The British
troops are
placed under
the com-
mand of Sir
John Moore.

* John Moore was born at Glasgow, on the 13th November 1761. He was the eldest son of Dr John Moore, the author of *Zeluco* and other celebrated works. Young Moore was educated at the public school and university of that city, and was abroad for five years in company with his father, who was travelling tutor to the Duke of Hamilton, by which means he saw much of the world, gained a knowledge of modern languages, and acquired that suavity and elegance of manner for which he was remarkable through life. In 1776, he obtained an ensigncy in the 51st regiment, then lying at Minorca, and soon after a lieutenancy in the 82d, with which he served through all the campaigns of the American war. At the commencement of the Revolutionary contest, he was lieutenant-colonel of his old regiment, the 51st, at the head of which he was employed in 1794 in the reduction of Corsica. Subsequently he was engaged in the reduction of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice, in the West Indies, in which services he distinguished himself so much that Sir Ralph Abercromby, in his public despatches, characterised his conduct as the "admiration of the whole army." During the rebellion in Ireland, in 1798, he was again called into active service; and the victory gained over the rebels in that year, at Wexford, was mainly owing to his talents and arrangements. In 1799

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Nap. i.
247, 248.
Lond. i.
179, 180.
Nevis, ii.
264.

84.

Strength of
the united
British
forces, and
their ad-
vance into
Spain.

strong, under the orders of SIR DAVID BAIRD,* whose gallantry and firmness had been conspicuous at the storming of Seringapatam, was assembled in the British islands, and was destined to land at Corunna, descend through Galicia, and co-operate with those which had advanced from Portugal, in the plains of Leon.¹

The two together, it was hoped, would amount to nearly forty thousand men, even after providing, in an adequate manner, for the security of Portugal, and the magazines and depots in the rear—a force which appeared, and doubtless was, if tolerably supported by its Peninsular allies, capable of achieving great things for the deliverance of Europe. Meanwhile the Spanish troops, fully five thousand strong, which had been liberated at Lisbon, were equipped anew at the expense of the British government, and despatched by sea to Catalonia, from whence the most pressing representations had been sent

his valour and conduct were again evinced in the expedition to the Helder; in 1801 he led the vanguard which first landed in Aboukir Bay, and rushed with such vigour up the sandhills; and in the decisive battle of 21st March, in which he was wounded, his gallantry and conduct attracted universal notice. For these services he was made a knight of the Bath; and for some years commanded the army which occupied Sicily, until in 1807 he was sent in command of the expedition to the Baltic, from which he was soon recalled to more glorious, though melancholy destinies, in the Spanish Peninsula. Brave, chivalrous, and high-spirited, no man ever more thoroughly understood the art of war, or more completely acquired the affections while he commanded the respect of his soldiers; and to the improvement of their discipline and increase of their comforts he devoted a large portion of his attention. But though second to none in personal valour, he had not the energy and vigour necessary to reinstate the military character of England after the early disasters of the Revolutionary war: and was unhappily possessed with a desponding impression as to the capability of this country to withstand the power of France on the Continent, which was very different from the fearless confidence and indomitable tenacity of Clive or Wellington. The heroism he displayed in his last moments, and the romantic circumstances attending his death, have justly secured for him a lasting place in the grateful affections of his country.—See MOORE'S *Life*, 2 vols. by his brother, London, 1832; and *Scottish Biography*, iv. 28, 29.

* David Baird was the second son of William Baird, Esq., of the Bairs of Newbyth, in East Lothian, an ancient and respectable family. He entered the army in December 16, 1772, as an ensign in the 2d Foot, and he was ere long engaged in serious service in that regiment, when it was despatched to Madras in 1779, to take a part in the formidable war that then raged between the infant British settlements at Madras and the redoubtable forces of Hyder Ali. In July 1780 Hyder's dreadful irruption into the Carnatic

of the necessity of regular troops to aid the efforts and improve the discipline of the numerous peasants in arms in the province; the Russian fleet, in conformity with the treaty, was conducted to the British harbours; and a central junta was formed at Lisbon, to administer the affairs of the kingdom in the absence of the Prince-Regent. The preparations for the campaign being at length completed, the British troops began their march from the Portuguese capital, for the seat of war at the foot of the Pyrenees.¹

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

Sept. 25.
Oct. 13.
¹ Lond. i.
179, 181.
Nap. i. 247,
248. South.
i. 267.
Nevis, ii.
264, 287.

The decisive influence of the recent successes and central position of the English army, in possession of the capital and principal strongholds of the country, rendered the appointment of a central junta, and the defeat of the local intrigues everywhere set on foot in order to obtain a preponderating voice for particular men in its councils, a comparatively easy task in Portugal. But the case was very different in Spain, where jealousy of foreign inter-

85.
Great diffi-
culty in
forming a
Central
Junta at
Madrid.

took place, when seventy thousand horse threatened with destruction the little army of five thousand men, who struggled to defend the British possessions on the coast. In this terrible campaign, young Baird was at once initiated into the most perilous and animating warfare. In September 1780, after a desperate and most heroic resistance, he was made prisoner by Hyder at the head of fifty thousand infantry and twenty-five thousand horse, in consequence of the accidental blowing up of the British ammunition-waggons in the centre of their square, which deprived them of their whole reserve ammunition, after the supply which the men had in their cartridge-boxes was expended in repelling the incessant charges of the Asiatic cavalry. Even after this disaster, and when their little square, now reduced to two hundred Europeans, had no weapons for their defence but the bayonets of the men and the swords of the officers, they repelled no less than thirteen charges of Hyder's horse; and at length the few survivors were only made prisoners by being fairly pierced through and overwhelmed by the ponderous elephants and innumerable squadrons of the enemy. Being made prisoner in this terrible conflict, Baird was conducted to Seringapatam, where he was chained by the leg to another captive, and confined in a dungeon for three years and a half. In July 1784, however, he obtained his release upon the conclusion of the peace with Hyder, and was promoted to the rank of major in the 71st regiment, of which he soon became lieutenant-colonel. In 1791, he took an active part in the campaign against Tippoo Saib and the storming of the intrenched camp in front of Seringapatam, and in 1793 he commanded a brigade of Europeans at the siege of Pondicherry. After this he returned for a short time to Europe, but was again sent back to India as brigadier-general, in which capacity he commanded the storming party at Seringapatam, of which an account has already been given.—*Ante*, Chap. XLIX. § 27; *Scottish Biography*, i. 82, 83.

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1808.

ference had already risen to a most extravagant height ; where the people entertained a most exaggerated idea of their own strength and resources ; and many different provincial governments, elected under the pressure of necessity in different parts of the country, had opposite and jarring pretensions to advance for the supreme direction of affairs. Much division, and many dangerous jealousies, were rapidly rising upon this subject, when the junta of Seville, whose prudence and success, as well as the consideration due to the great cities and opulent province which they represented, had already invested them with a sort of lead in the affairs of the Peninsula, had the good fortune to bring forward a project which, from its equity and expedience, soon commanded universal assent. This was, that the different supreme juntas, each on the same day, should elect two deputies, who should, when united together, form the central government, to which all the local authorities were to be subject ; that the local juntas should nevertheless continue their functions, in obedience to the commands of the supreme junta ; and that the seat of government should be some town in La Mancha, equally convenient for all the deputies.¹

Aug. 3.
¹ Tor. ii. 80,
92. Jovel-
lanos Me-
moria, 12,
24. South.
ii. 277.

86.
Appoint-
ment of a
Central
Junta at
Madrid.
Sept. 25.

This proposal having met with general concurrence, the different provincial juntas elected their respective representatives for the central government, which was installed with extraordinary pomp at Aranjuez in the end of September, and immediately commenced its sittings. At first it consisted of twenty-four members, but their ranks were soon augmented, by the number of provinces which claimed the right of sending representatives, to thirty-five—an unhappy medium, too small for a legislative assembly, too large for an executive cabinet. Though it numbered several eminent men and incorruptible patriots among its members, particularly Count Florida Blanca, who, though in the eightieth year of his age, preserved undecayed the vigour of intellect and cautious policy which had distinguished his long administration, and Jovellanos, in

whom the severities of a tedious captivity had still left unextinguished the light of an elevated understanding and the warmth of an unsuspecting heart; yet it was easy to foresee, what subsequent events too mournfully verified, that it was not composed of the elements calculated either to communicate vigour and decision to the national counsels, or impress foreign nations with a favourable idea of its probable stability. Formed for the most part of persons who were totally unknown, at least to public life, before the commencement of the revolution, and many of whom had been elevated to greatness solely by its convulsions, it was early distinguished by that overweening jealousy of its own importance, which in all men is the accompaniment of newly, and still more of undeservedly, acquired power, and torn with intestine intrigues. These too broke out at a moment when the utmost possible unanimity and vigour were required, to enable them to make head against the formidable tempest which was arising against them, under the guidance of the Emperor Napoleon.¹

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Tor. ii.
89, 90, 97.
Nap. i. 298,
308. South.
ii. 277, 313.
Jovellanos,
Memoria,
ii. 12, 34.

The central junta displayed a becoming vigour in asserting the inviolability of their privileges against Cuesta, who had arrested one of its members; but they were far from evincing equal energy in the more important duty of providing for the wants of the military force which was to maintain the conflict. So completely had the idea of their own invincibility taken possession of the Spaniards, that they never once contemplated the possibility of defeat. All their arrangements were based on the assumption that they were speedily to drive the French over the Pyrenees, and intended to meet the contingencies which might then occur. They did not imitate the conduct of Napoleon, who, after the drawn battle at Eylau, fortified all his strongholds as far back as the Rhine. Nothing was foreseen or provided for in case of disaster: there were no magazines or reserved stores accumulated in the rear, no positions fortified, no for-

87.
Miserable
condition of
the Central
Govern-
ment and
the armies
on the Ebro.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

tresses armed ; there was no money in the treasury, no funds in the military chests of the generals. The soldiers were naked, destitute of shoes, and rarely supplied with provisions : the cavalry dismounted ; the artillery in the most wretched condition ; even the magnificent supplies which the generosity of England had thrown with such profuse bounty into the Peninsula were squandered or dilapidated by private cupidity, and seldom reached the proper objects of their destination. Corruption in its worst form pervaded every department of the state ; the inferior officers sold or plundered the stores ; the superior in many instances made free with the military chest. In the midst of the general misrule, the central junta, amidst eloquent and pompous declamation, could find no more worthy object of their practical deliberations than discussing the honorary titles which they were to bear, the ample salaries which they assigned to themselves, the dress they were to wear, and the form of the medals which were to be suspended round their necks. During the progress of this general scene of cupidity, imbecility, and vanity, nothing efficient was done, either for the service of the armies or the defence of the state. This deplorable result is not to be ascribed exclusively, or even chiefly, to the character of the members of the central junta, or the leaders at the head of the troops. It arose from the nature of things—the overthrow of all regular government in Spain, and the jarring and conflicting interests of the popular assemblages by which its place had been supplied. Democratic energy is a powerful auxiliary, and when directed or made use of, in the first instance, by aristocratic foresight or despotic authority, it often produces the most important results. But its vigour speedily exhausts itself if not sustained by the lasting compulsion of terror or force ; and the tyranny of a Committee of Public Salvation is not less necessary to give success to its external operations than to restore credit or usefulness to its internal administration.¹

¹ Tor. ii.
95, 102.
Lond. i.
200, 203.
Nap. i. 310,
311. South.
ii. 298, 307,
315.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

88.

The Marquis
Romana ob-
tains infor-
mation of
what is
going on
in Spain.

In the north of Europe, however, decisive steps were adopted by the British government, which had the happiest results, and succeeded in restoring to the Spanish standards ten thousand of the veteran soldiers whom the prudent foresight and anticipating perfidy of Napoleon had so early removed from the Peninsula. It has been already mentioned, that so early as spring 1807, the French Emperor had made it the price of his reconciliation with Spain, after the premature proclamation of the Prince of the Peace in the October preceding, that she should furnish sixteen thousand men to aid in the contest in the north of Europe, and that the corps of the Marquis of Romana was in consequence forwarded to the shores of the Baltic.¹ Soon after the commencement of hostilities in the Peninsula, Castanos, who had entered into very cordial and confidential communications with Sir Hew Dalrymple, then chief in command at Gibraltar, strongly represented to that officer the great importance of conveying to the Spanish corps, which was stationed in Jutland, secret information as to the real state of affairs, which was likely to lead to their at once declaring for the cause of their country. In consequence of this advice, the English government made various attempts to communicate with the Spanish forces, but they were at first frustrated by the vigilant eye which the French kept on their doubtful allies. At length, however, by the address of a Catholic priest named Robertson, the dangerous communication was effected, and Romana was informed, in a secret conference held in Lahn, of the extraordinary events which had occurred in the Peninsula—the victory in Andalusia, the repulse from Saragossa, the capitulation of Junot, the flight from Madrid.² *

¹ *Anto*, ch.
xlvi. § 5.² *Tor*. ii.
68, 69.
Nap. i. 337.
South. ii.
336, 345.

* Robertson was despatched in a boat from Heligoland, of which the English had recently taken possession, to the coast of Jutland: but the principal difficulty was to furnish him with a secret sign of intelligence, which, beyond the reach of any other's observation, might at once convince Romana of the reality and importance of his mission. This was at last fallen upon in a very singular way. Romana, who was an accomplished scholar, had been formerly intimate with Mr Frere when ambassador in Spain; and one day, having called

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

89.

Escape of
the Mar-
quis and
his troops.
Aug. 9 and
13.

Aug. 9.

Violently agitated at this heart-stirring intelligence, the noble Spaniard did not for a moment hesitate as to the course which he should adopt. Robertson was immediately sent back with a request that a British naval force might be forwarded to convey away his troops, and that, if possible, the assistance of Sir John Moore and the English troops at Goteburg might be granted in aid of the undertaking. The latter part of the request could not be complied with, as Sir John Moore, with the British troops, had already sailed for England; but Admiral Keats, with the fleet stationed in those seas, drew near to the coast of Jutland, and suddenly appeared off Nyborg in the island of Funen. Romana, having seized all the Danish craft he could collect, pushed across the arm of the sea which separated the mainland from that island, and, with the assistance of Keats, made himself master of the port and castle of Nyborg. From thence he traversed another strait to Langland, where all the troops he could collect were assembled together, and publicly informed of the extraordinary events which had occurred in the Peninsula, and which went to sever them from the connexion they had so long maintained with their brethren in arms. Kneeling around their standards, wrought to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by the intelligence they had received, with hands uplifted to heaven and tears streaming from their eyes, they unanimously swore to remain faithful to their country, and brave all the anger of the Emperor Napoleon, in the attempt to aid its fortunes.¹

¹ Tor. ii.
68, 70. Nap.
i. 337, 338.
South. ii.
336, 337.

Such was the universal zeal which animated them, that one of the regiments which lay at Ebeltoft having received the intelligence at ten in the evening, imme-

when he was reading the *Gests of the Cid*, the English ambassador suggested a conjectural emendation of one of the lines.* Romana instantly perceived the propriety of the proposed emendation; and this line so amended was made the passport which Robertson was to make use of, which at once proved successful. —See SOUTHEY, ii. 337.

* “Aun vea el hora que vos Merezea dos tanto.”
Mr Frere proposes to read “Merezedes tanto.”

diately started, and journeying all night and the greater part of the next day, reached their comrades at the point of embarkation in time to get off, after having marched fifty miles in twenty-one hours. Nine thousand five hundred were brought away, and after touching at Goteburg were forwarded in transports by the English government to the coasts of Galicia, where they were disembarked amidst shouts of joy before the middle of September, in time to share in the dangers which the efforts of Napoleon were preparing for their country. The remainder, being stationed in the middle of Jutland, could not be rescued, and were made prisoners by the French troops; and as the horses of two of the regiments of cavalry which embarked could not be provided for in the English ships, they were abandoned on the beach by the horsemen whom they had transported so far from their native plains. These noble animals, eleven hundred in number, of the true Andalusian breed, all of which were unmutilated, seemed to share in the passions which agitated their masters. No sooner were they liberated on the sands from control, than, forming into squadrons, they charged violently with loud cries against each other; and when the British fleet hove out of sight, they could still be discerned by telescopes, fighting with each other on the beach, surrounded by the dead and the dying, with all the fury of human passions.^{1*}

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

90.

Extraordi-
nary scene
at the em-
barkation
of the
troops.
Aug. 13.

¹ Tor. ii. 68,
70. South.
ii. 336, 351.
Nap. i. 337,
338.

* This singular anecdote as to the horses, which were all of the highest breed, and in the finest condition, is related by Southey on the authority of Sir Richard Keats himself, as well as in a contemporary journal, *Plain Englishman*, i. 294, on the same high testimony.—SOUTHEY, ii. 346.

CHAPTER LV.

IRRUPTION OF NAPOLEON INTO SPAIN.

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LV.
1808.
1.
Deep im-
pression
which these
events made
on the mind
of Napo-
leon.

THIS long and unprecedented train of disasters made the deepest impression on the far-seeing and prophetic mind of Napoleon. It was not the mere loss of soldiers, fortresses, or territory which affected him ; these, to a sovereign possessed of such almost boundless resources, were of little importance, and could easily be supplied. It was their moral influence which he dreaded : it was the shake given to the opinions of men which devoured him with anxiety. No one knew better, or has expressed more clearly and emphatically, that his empire was founded entirely on opinion ; that it was the minds of men whom his own victories and those of the Revolution had really subdued ; and that, great as their triumphs had really been, it was the imaginative idea of their invincibility which constituted the secret charm that had fascinated and subdued the world. Now, however, the spell appeared to be broken ; the veil was drawn aside, the charm dissolved. This had been done, too, by hands whose weakness and inexperience augmented the severity of the blow. Armies had surrendered, kingdoms had been evacuated, capitals abandoned ; in Andalusia the French legions had undergone a disgraceful capitulation, in Portugal experienced the fate of Closter-Seven. These disasters had been inflicted, not by the stern courage of Russia or the discipline of Austria ; not by the skill of

civilisation or the perfection of art, but by the simple enthusiasm of an insurgent people ; by bands at which the French legions had with reason scoffed ; by those island warriors whose descent on the Continent his tutored journals had hailed as the dawn of yet brighter glories to the French arms.* Such misfortunes, coming from such quarters, appeared with reason to be doubly calamitous. His proclamations, instead of the heralds of victory, had become the precursors of defeat ; and he anticipated in their ultimate effect, not merely the possible expulsion of his arms from the Peninsula, but the general insurrection of Europe against his authority.¹

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1808.

¹Thib. vii. 1,
14. Month.
vi. 350.
South. ii.
359, 360.
Jom. ii. 79,
81.

Already this effect had in some degree appeared. Austria, by a decree of 9th June, had directed the formation of a landwehr, or local militia, in all the provinces of her still vast dominions. The Archduke Charles, at the head of the war department, had infused an unheard-of activity into all branches of the army ; and three hundred thousand provincial troops, already in the course of formation, promised to add an invaluable reserve to the regular forces. Pressed by Napoleon to give some account of such formidable preparations, Count Metternich, the imperial ambassador at Paris, alleged the specious excuse that the cabinet of Vienna was only imitating the conduct of its powerful neighbours ; and that, when Bavaria had not merely adopted the system of the French conscription, but organised national guards, which raised its disposable force to a hundred thousand men, it became indispensable to take corresponding measures of security in the Hereditary States. The reason assigned was plausible ; but it failed to impose upon the French Emperor, who forthwith directed the

2.
Armaments
of Austria,
and negotia-
tions with
that power
and the
princes of
the Rhenish
Confede-
racy.

Aug. 14.

* "Nothing," said the president of the senate, in his public speech, "can be more agreeable to the French and to the Continent, than to see the English at length throw off the mask, and descend into the lists to meet our warriors. Would to God that eighty or a hundred thousand English would present themselves before us in an open field ! The Continent has in every age been their tomb." Fifteen days afterwards the Convention of Cintra was published !— See *Moniteur*, 22d Sept. 1808.

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1808.

princes of the Rhenish Confederacy to call out and encamp their respective contingents, and shortly after adopted the most energetic measures for the augmentation of the military strength of the empire. Champagne, at the same time, made the most vigorous remonstrances to Metternich. "What would your government be at?" said he: "not only is it arming, but it has adopted extreme measures, which necessity alone could justify. Your princes are traversing your provinces, and summon the people to the defence of the country. Everything is in movement in the Austrian monarchy. And yet you know that, far from menacing Austria, our Emperor desires only to remain at peace with her—that we covet none of her possessions. Hitherto the Emperor has been desirous to pretend ignorance of these preparations; but beware! He cannot carry his dissimulation much further: a spark may light a universal conflagration. England may well rejoice at present: she has not an ally on the Continent; she knows well she has nothing to expect from Russia."¹

¹ *Jom.* ii. 80.
Pelet, i. 64,
72. Cham-
pagne to
Metternich,
27th July
1808. *Bign.*
vii. 332.

3.
Napoleon's
preparations
to meet the
danger, and
great levy
by the
French go-
vernment.
Sept. 10.

The preparations of Napoleon for this fresh contest kept pace with these strongly awakened suspicions. By a senatus-consultum of the 10th September, the senate of France placed at the disposal of the French Emperor eighty thousand conscripts, taken from those coming to the legal age (eighteen to nineteen) in the years 1806-7-8 and 9, and eighty thousand additional from those of 1810, which last were, in an especial manner, destined to the defence of the coasts and frontiers of the empire. So far had the demands of the French Emperor already exceeded the increase of the human race, and the boundless consumption of mankind in the Revolutionary wars outstripped even the prolific powers of nature! The adulatory expressions with which this frightful demand was acquiesced in by the senate, were not less characteristic of the fawning servility, than its anticipating the resources of future years of the iron tyranny, which

distinguished the government of the Empire. "How," said Lacépède, their president, "would the shades of Louis XIV., of Francis I., of the great Henry, be consoled by the generous resolutions taken by Napoleon! The French hasten to respond to his sacred voice! He requires a new proof of their affection; they hasten with generous ardour to furnish it to him. The wish of the French people, sire! is the same as that of your Majesty: the war of Spain is *politic, it is just, it is necessary; it will be victorious*. May the English send their whole armies to combat in the Peninsula: they will furnish only feeble glories to our arms, and fresh disgrace to themselves." Such was the roseate hue under which the titled and richly endowed senators of France represented the hideous spectacle of a hundred and sixty thousand men being torn from their homes to meet certain destruction, in the prosecution of the most perfidious and unjust aggression recorded in history; and such the triumphs which they anticipated for their arms, when Providence was preparing for them, as its deserved punishment, the catastrophes of Salamanca and Vitoria.¹

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1808.

¹ Moniteur,
Sept. 10.
Montg. vi.
350. Jom.
ii. 82, 83.

At the same time, a subsidiary treaty was concluded with Prussia, calculated to relieve, in some degree, that unhappy power from the chains which had fettered it since the battle of Jena. Napoleon, vanquished by necessity, and standing in need of a hundred thousand soldiers of the Grand Army for the Peninsular war, was driven to more moderate sentiments. It was stipulated that, for the space of ten years, the Prussian army should not exceed forty thousand men; that Glogau, Stettin, and Cüstrin should be garrisoned by French troops till the entire payment of arrears of contributions of every description; that their garrisons, each four thousand strong, should be maintained and paid solely at the expense of Prussia; that seven military roads, for the use of France and her allies, should traverse the Prussian dominions; and that the arrears of the war contributions

4.
Subsidiary
treaty with
Prussia.
Sept. 8.

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1808.

should be reduced to one hundred and forty million francs, or £5,600,000 sterling ; but that, at the expiration of forty days after these sums were provided for, the French troops should, with the exception of these fortresses, evacuate the Prussian dominions. To Prussia this evacuation was a source of unspeakable relief, and notwithstanding that the restriction on the army was both humiliating and hurtful, yet the cabinet of Frederick-William had no alternative but submission. They contrived, however, by the skilful change of the soldiers called out into actual service, to elude the most galling part of the obligation, and prepared the means of political resurrection in future times.¹

¹ Montg. vi.
350. Martens, N. R.
i. 106, 127.

5.
Interview
at Erfurth
with Alexander.

Napoleon, however, was well aware that, even after these treaties and precautions, he was still exposed to great danger from the renewed hostility of the German states in his rear, while engaged with the armies of England and Spain in front in the Peninsula, if he was not well established in the alliance with Russia. It was in the breast of Alexander that the true security for the peace of the Continent beyond the Rhine was to be found. This was more especially the case, as the losses and serious aspect of the Spanish war had already rendered it necessary to withdraw a large part of the Grand Army from the north of Germany ; and before winter, not more than a hundred thousand French soldiers would remain to assert the French supremacy in the centre and north of Europe. Impressed with these ideas, the French Emperor used his utmost efforts to bring Alexander into his views regarding Spain, and for this purpose he held out again the deceitful lure of an entire partition of the Turkish empire. So early as February 1808, he had written to the Czar, expressing his desire to settle now in a definitive manner the questions of the East, to admit Austria into a share of the spoil, and to set on foot in concert a gigantic expedition to India, which might finally destroy the English power in Hindostan. Alexander

readily fell into the snare. "Ah! what a great man!" exclaimed he: "now I see again the ideas of Tilsit. Tell him that I am devoted to him for life; my armies, my empire, are at his disposal. Your master wishes to interest Austria in the dismemberment of the Turkish empire; he is right: It is a wise thought; I at once agree to it. He wishes an expedition to India; I consent to it. I explained the difficulties with which it was attended during our conferences at Tilsit; but he is accustomed to set physical obstacles at naught. But let him not be uneasy; my preparations shall be proportioned to the difficulty." Not content with this, Napoleon resolved to do his utmost to prevail on the Czar to meet him at a town in the north of Germany, where the destinies of the world might be arranged. Such was the ascendant which he had gained over his mind during the negotiations at Tilsit, and such the attractions of the new objects of ambition in Finland and on the Danube, which he had the address to present to his ambition, that Alexander completely fell into his views. Erfurth was the town selected for this purpose, and there a conference was held between the two potentates, almost rivalling that of Tilsit in interest and importance. On his route for Germany, the Emperor met large bodies of the Grand Army on their road from the Rhine to the Pyrenean frontier; he addressed them in one of those nervous proclamations which ever bear so strong an impress of his genius, but which, long the heralds of his victories, began now to afford a curious contrast to the disasters he was destined to undergo.* The troops traversed France in the highest spirits, animated by the Emperor's address,

* "Soldiers! after having triumphed on the banks of the Danube and the Vistula, you have traversed Germany by forced marches. I now make you traverse France without giving you a moment's repose. Soldiers! I have need of you. The hideous presence of the leopard [the arms of England] defiles the continent of Spain and Portugal. Let it fly dismayed at your appearance! Let us carry our arms to the Columns of Hercules; there also we have outrages to avenge. Soldiers! you have surpassed the renown of all modern

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1808.

¹ Thiers,
viii. 441,
442. Thib.
49, 51.
Montg. vi.
352. Jom.
ii. 84, 85.

magnificently fêted by the municipalities, beneath triumphal arches, and amidst songs of congratulation from their fellow-citizens. Vain illusion! They were marching only to the scene of protracted agony; to whiten with their bones the fields of Spain; to a lengthened conflict, which, ushered in at first by brilliant victories, was destined in the end to thin their ranks by its carnage, and overwhelm their honour by its disasters.¹

6.
Its secret
object, and
tenor of the
conferences
held there.

Sept. 26.

The Emperor Alexander set out before Napoleon, and on his way paid a melancholy visit to the King and Queen of Prussia at Königsberg. Proceeding on his route, he rapidly traversed the Prussian states, received with marked gratification the honours paid to him by the French troops; took Marshal Lannes with him in his own carriage, and expressed publicly to the French officers the satisfaction which he felt "at finding himself among such brave men, such renowned warriors." Proceeding in this manner, and received, wherever he passed, with the utmost distinction by the French authorities, he arrived at Weimar late on the evening of the 26th September, and found everything prepared for his reception by his brother the Grand-duke Constantine, and the French ambassador Caulaincourt, who had arrived two days before. Meanwhile Napoleon, in more than regal state, was leisurely advancing from Paris, surrounded by the sovereigns, princes, and ministers of Germany, enjoying the secret satisfaction of exhibiting the Russian Autocrat awaiting his arrival in an inconsiderable town of Germany, above five hundred miles distant from the nearest point of his dominions. At ten o'clock on the morning of the 27th, he made his public entry into Erfurth, and, after reviewing the troops,

armies; but have you yet equalled the glory of the Roman legions, which in the same campaign frequently triumphed on the Rhine and the Euphrates, in Illyria and on the Tagus? A long peace, enduring prosperity, shall be the reward of your labours. A true Frenchman should never taste of repose till the seas are enfranchised from their oppressors. Soldiers! all that you have already done, all that you will yet do for the happiness of the French people, will be eternally engraved in my heart."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 50.

proceeded on horseback to meet Alexander, who had left Weimar at the same hour to approach his august ally. The two sovereigns met on the highway, between the villages of Ottsted and Nora, near a remarkable pear-tree, which is still to be seen on the road-side. Alexander immediately descended from his carriage; Napoleon alighted from his horse, and the two monarchs embraced with the strongest marks of mutual esteem. The French Emperor was decorated with the order of St Andrew of Russia, the Russian bore the grand badge of the Legion of Honour on his bosom. Magnificent presents were interchanged on both parts; side by side the two Emperors rode into Erfurth, amidst the roar of artillery, the cheers of multitudes, and the thundering acclamations of ten thousand soldiers. When they arrived at the hotel prepared for the Czar, the monarchs again embraced, and ascended the stairs arm in arm. Napoleon requested Alexander to give the watchword of the day; he complied, and it was "Erfurth and confidence." The two sovereigns dined together, and in the evening a general illumination evinced the intoxicating joy of the inhabitants.^{1*}

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¹ Thib. vii.
61. Mont.
vi. 352.
Bign. viii.
25, 26.

No adequate idea can be formed of the greatness of Napoleon's power, or the almost irresistible sway which he had acquired in northern and central Europe, but by those who witnessed the pomp and deference with which he was surrounded at Tilsit and Erfurth, and four years afterwards at Dresden. Environed by a brilliant *cortège* of marshals, generals, diplomatists, and staff-officers, he was at the same time the object of obsequious attention to a crowd of princes and inferior potentates, who depended on his breath for their political existence or nominal independence. All the beauty, rank, and distinction of Germany were assembled. Seventy princes or independent sovereigns were in attendance; and literally

7.
Fêtes and
spectacles
at Erfurth.

* The place between Ottsted and Nora, where this remarkable meeting took place, is still shown to travellers.—*Personal Observation.*

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1808.

it might be said, that the monarchs of Europe watched for a favourable sign from the mighty conqueror's chamberslains. In the midst of all this magnificence, however, he did deserved homage to the aristocracy of intellect : in one of the assemblies of all the potentates of Europe, he addressed Wieland and Goethe next after the Emperor Alexander, and before any of the corps of kings and princes who were watching for a look. The two Emperors spent the forenoons together, conversing on the public affairs of Europe and the separate plans of administration for their vast dominions ; they then rode out in company to a review or inspection of their respective troops, dined alternately with each other, and in the evening went to the same box at the theatre. A brilliant band of the most distinguished French performers had come from Paris to grace the conference, and during a fortnight the theatre of Erfurth, resplendent with illustrious men and beautiful women, beheld the masterpieces of Racine and Corneille performed by the talents of Talma, Saint Pris, Mademoiselles Duchesnois and Bourgoïn, besides a host of inferior performers.¹*

Thib. vii.
61, 70. Las
Cas. iv. 232.
Hard. x.
239. Bign.
viii. 26.

* The attentions of Alexander and Napoleon to each other at Erfurth, though delicate, were got up with so much anxiety, as to convey to the spectators the impression that the intimacy of Tilsit had somewhat declined, and that a feeling of which they were on every occasion so very solicitous to give public demonstration, could not in reality have a very deep foundation. On one occasion Alexander expressed great admiration of a singularly beautiful dressing-case and breakfast set of porcelain and gold in Napoleon's sleeping apartment : they were sent to him as a present on the same evening. At the representation of *Œdipe* on October 3, when the line was repeated,—

“ L'amitié d'un grand homme est un bienfait des dieux,”

Alexander turned to Napoleon, and presented to him his hand. A few days after, the Czar, when preparing to go into the *salle-à-manger* to dinner, perceived that he had forgotten his sword. Napoleon immediately unbuckled his own, and presented it to him.—“ I accept it as a mark of your friendship,” replied Alexander : “ your Majesty may be well assured I shall never draw it against you.” In the midst of all his grandeur, Napoleon had sufficient greatness of soul and true discernment to attempt no concealment of his origin. At dinner one day the conversation turned on the Golden Bull, and the primate of Germany insisted that it had been published in 1409.—“ I beg your pardon,” observed Napoleon ; “ *When I was a second lieutenant of artil-*

On the 6th October the whole court proceeded to Weimar, where they were magnificently entertained by the Grand-duke of that place; and Napoleon enjoyed the satisfaction of conversing with Goethe, Wieland, and the other illustrious men who have thrown an imperishable lustre over German literature. On the 7th, the august party visited the field of Jena. An elegant temple had been constructed by the Grand-duke on the highest summit of the Landgrafenberg, the scene of Napoleon's frigid bivouac two years before, on the night before the battle;¹ and a little lower down were a number of tents, of sumptuous construction, where the Emperor and his *cortège* of kings were entertained, and from whence he pointed out to Alexander the line of the different movements which, on that memorable spot, had led to the overthrow of the Czar's most cherished projects. At length, after seventeen days spent together in the closest intimacy, the two Emperors, on the 14th October, the anniversary of the battle of Jena, rode out together to the spot where they had met on the 27th September; they there alighted from their horses, and walked side by side for a few minutes in close conversation, and then,²

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8.
And on the
field of Jena.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
xliii. § 41.

² Thib. vii.
61, 76.
Montg. vi.
353, 354.
Las Cas. iv.
232. Hard.
x. 239.

lery, I was three years at Valence, and there I had the good fortune to lodge with a learned person, in whose library I learned that and many other valuable details. Nature has given me a memory singularly tenacious of figures." Mademoiselle Bourgoïn, whose personal charms were equal to her talents as an actress, attracted the particular notice of the Emperor Alexander; and he inquired of Napoleon if there would be any inconvenience in his forming her personal acquaintance. "None whatever," replied Napoleon, "except that it would be a certain mode of making you thoroughly known to all Paris. The day after to-morrow, at the post hour, the most minute particulars of your visits to her will be despatched: and soon there will not be a statuary in Paris who will not be in a situation to model your person from head to foot."—This hint had the effect of cooling the rising passion of the Russian Emperor, who, with all his admiration for the fair sex, had an extreme apprehension of such a species of notoriety. It was at Erfurth that Napoleon made the memorable observation to Talma on his erroneous view of the character of Nero, in the *Britannicus* of Racine; viz., that the poet had not represented him as a tyrant in the commencement of his career; and that it was not till love, his ruling passion at the moment, was thwarted, that he became violent, cruel, and oppressive.—See LAS CASES, iv. 232; and THIBAUDEAU, vii. 61, 65, 71.

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1808.

embracing, bade each other a final adieu. Alexander returned rapidly towards Poland; Napoleon remeasured his steps slowly and pensively towards Erfurth. They never met again in this world.*

9.
Secret views
of both par-
ties at the
conference.

But it was neither to amuse themselves with reviews and theatrical representations, nor to make proposals to Austria and England, which they were well aware would not be listened to, that the two Emperors had come so far and remained together so long. It was with no view to peace, but, on the contrary, with a distinct prophetic anticipation of an approaching resumption of hostilities, that the conference of Erfurth took place. Napoleon clearly perceived that Austria was about to take advantage of his immersion in the Peninsular war, and of the extraordinary preparations which England was making for a Continental campaign, to renew the contest in Germany; and it was to Russia alone that he could look for a sure guarantee of the peace of the north of Europe during the arduous crisis which was approaching. Albeit internally convinced of the necessity of a fearful contest in the end with the power of France, Alexander was not less sensible of the importance of gaining time for the preparations for it. He was strongly impressed with the conviction, that the peculiar and national interests of Russia were in the mean time chiefly to be promoted by remaining firm in the French alliance, and that, when the evil day did come, the best pre-

* In one of their conversations, Alexander strongly represented to the French Emperor the resistance which he experienced in his senate from the aristocratic chiefs, in his projects for the public good. "Believe me," said Napoleon, "how large soever a throne may be, it will always be found too small for two masters."—MONTGAILLARD, vi. 354.

Though Austria was not admitted as a party to the conference at Erfurth, Baron Vincent, envoy of the cabinet of Vienna, came with a letter from the Emperor Francis on the subject of the armaments on either side in southern Germany; and a joint memorial was presented by the Emperors of France and Russia, proposing a termination of hostilities to the government of Great Britain. But these important state papers will more fitly come under consideration in the succeeding chapters, which treat specifically of the affairs of Austria and England at this momentous crisis of their history.¹

¹ See *infra*, chap. lvi. and lvii.

paration for it would be found in the augmentation of the strength of the empire in Finland and on the Danube, which was likely to follow an adherence to his present engagements. Thus, while both these great potentates were lavishing professions of friendship and regard on each other, they were in reality nursing the feelings destined to lead to inextinguishable hostility in their hearts. Napoleon returned, almost blinded by Russian flattery, to Paris, to prepare, in the subjugation of the Peninsula, the means of arraying the countless host which he was afterwards to lead to the Kremlin; and Alexander, loaded with French presents, remeasured his steps to Muscovy to organise the force destined, after adding Finland and the principalities on the Danube to his dominions, to hurl back to the Seine the tide of Gallic invasion.^{1*}

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¹ Thib. vii.
76, 78.
Boutour.
i. 32, 33,
45. Jom.
iii. 86.

10.
Tenor of the
conferences
held there.

The conferences of Erfurth were reduced, after various proposals on both sides had been considered, to a formal treaty on October 12, which was to be kept secret during ten years. By it France recognised Finland, Wallachia, and Moldavia, as integral parts of the Russian empire, and engaged, if negotiations to that effect should be set on foot with the court of Stockholm and the Divan, to abstain from all mediation or interference. England also, as the price of any pacification, was to recognise the same acquisitions to Russia, which on its side agreed to the whole changes of dynasty effected by Napoleon in the Spanish peninsula.

* "The Emperor Alexander," says Boutourlin, "felt that the alliance concluded at Tilsit, and cemented at Erfurth, as soon as it ceased to be conformable to the interests of Napoleon, would come to an end; and that the grand crisis was approaching which was destined either to consolidate the universal empire which the French Emperor was endeavouring to establish on the Continent, or to break the chains which retained so many Continental states under his rule. Determined never to submit to any condition inconsistent with the honour of his crown, the Emperor of Russia regarded the rupture as near and unavoidable, and thenceforward applied himself silently to organise the immense resources of his states, to resist the danger which was approaching; a danger which promised to be the more terrible, that Russia would have to sustain it to all appearance unsupported, against the accumulated forces of the greater part of Europe."—BOUTOURLIN, i. 45.

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An invitation to peace was to be sent to England on the same conditions of agreeing to the whole Peninsular changes. In the event of war being continued between Russia and Turkey, France was not to interfere, unless Austria made common cause with the Porte, in which case Napoleon was to make common cause with Russia; and if Austria declared war against France, Russia was to attack that power on the side of Galicia. An indemnity for its losses was to be procured for Denmark, and no further partition permitted of Turkey by any power whatever, without the consent of France and Russia.* This was the whole extent of the formal treaty; but verbal conferences between the two Emperors, of equal moment, and to the same general purport, took place. In these the great object of the two potentates was to obtain the consent of each other to their respective projects of aggrandisement at the expense of the lesser states in their vicinity; and their mutual interests or necessities rendered this an easy task. Alexander gave his sanction to the invasion of Spain and Portugal, and the placing of princes of the Napoleon dynasty on the thrones of the Peninsula, as well as to the establishment of Murat in the kingdom of Naples, and the annexation of Tuscany to the French empire. The effects of this consent soon appeared in the accrediting of Russian ambassadors to the courts of these infant sovereigns. On the other hand, Napoleon consented to the uniting of Finland, Moldavia, and Wallachia to the already vast dominions of the Czar, admitted his relation and future brother-in-law, the Grand-duke of Oldenburg, into the Confederation of the Rhine, gave satisfactory explanation in regard to the grand-duchy of Warsaw, and held out to the Emperor of the East the prospect of obtaining aid from France in the attempt to stretch his mighty arms over the Asiatic Continent, and give a deadly wound to the power of England on the plains of Hindostan. Two different plans

* See the articles of this secret treaty, first given in *Brenon*, viii. 5, 11.

for the partition of the Turkish empire were here brought under discussion, as they had been at the previous conferences between Caulaincourt and Romanzoff. The first was the one previously arranged at Tilsit, whereby Russia was to obtain Wallachia, Moldavia, and Bulgaria, as far as the Balkan; the connivance of Austria was to be procured by the cession of Bosnia to the Imperial crown, and Servia as an appanage for one of the archdukes of the house of Hapsburg. France was to obtain Macedonia, Albania, Greece, and the isles, with Candia. The second plan was much more extensive, and would, if carried into effect, have made a total change in the world. Russia, according to this scheme, was to cross the Balkan, obtain Roumelia, with Constantinople, the Dardanelles, and portions of Asia Minor, so as to secure to her the command of the Straits. Austria was to be gratified with Macedonia, except Salonica, in addition to Bosnia and Servia; and France, besides Albania, Greece, Cyprus, and the isles of the Archipelago, was to be gifted with Egypt, while the Turks were to be banished to the eastern extremity of their empire on the Euphrates. But these vast projects of spoliation came to nothing, from the impossibility of coming to an understanding as to which party was to obtain possession of Constantinople—a city, as Napoleon justly observed, in the finest position in the world, and itself worth a kingdom.¹

In return for so many concessions, he procured from Alexander a promise to aid France with a considerable force in the event of a war with Austria, and conceded to his earnest entreaties a considerable relaxation of the oppressive burdens under which Prussia had so long groaned. The arrear of contributions, fixed at 140,000,000 francs, by the treaty of 8th September,² was reduced to 125,000,000; and a more important relaxation took place in the form of payment, by which, in consideration of 50,000,000 of francs received by Daru on the 5th

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¹ Bout. ii. 34,
35. Hard.
x. 234, 240.
Las Cas. iv.
231, 232.
Thiers, viii.
445, 447.

11.
Concessions
made by
Napoleon to
Russia and
Prussia.

² *Ante*, ch.
lv. § 4.

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November, and 70,000,000 more for which promissory notes were granted, the royal revenues were to be restored to the Prussian authorities; and the French troops, which were urgently required in the Peninsula, were, with the exception of the garrisons of Stettin, Cüstrin, and Glogau, entirely to evacuate the Prussian dominions. Thus had Napoleon the address to make his disasters in Spain, which imperatively required the removal of the French troops from the north of Germany, the means of gratifying Alexander by an apparent concession to his wishes, and diminishing the irritation of Prussia, which, in the event of hostilities with Austria, might prove, even after all its disasters, a formidable enemy in his rear.¹

¹ Hard. x.
239, 245.
Bout. i. 34,
35. Las
Cas. iv. 232,
233.

12.
Their differences concerning Napoleon's marriage, and Turkey.

Two other more delicate subjects of discussion were, after being touched on, averted rather than settled, by the diplomatic skill of the two Emperors, and left the seeds of inextinguishable future jealousy in their minds. The first was a proposal by Napoleon, who already had resolved to divorce Josephine, for the hand of the Grand-duchess Catherine Paulowna, the favourite sister of the Emperor: an overture which the astute Russian evaded by referring the matter, not to the reigning Empress, whose ambition its brilliancy might have dazzled, but to the Empress-dowager, whose firmness of character was proof against the seduction. She hastened to terminate the dangerous negotiation by alleging religious scruples, and shortly after marrying her daughter to Prince Oldenburg. The second was, an amicable but resolute contest for the possession of Constantinople. Napoleon, as he himself has told us,* could not bring his mind to cede to his rival the Queen of the East: Alexander, with justice, regarded it as the outlet to his southern dominions—the back-door of

* "We talked," says Napoleon, "of the affairs of Turkey at Erfurth. Alexander was very desirous that I should agree to his obtaining possession of Constantinople, but I could never bring my mind to consent to it. It is the noblest harbour in the world, is placed in the finest situation, and is itself worth a kingdom."—LAS CASES, iv. 231; and O'MEARA, i. 362.

his empire,—and was earnest that its key should be placed in his hands. Fearful of interrupting their present harmony by any such irreconcilable theme of discord, the subject was, by common consent, laid aside: the City of Constantine was suffered to remain in the hands of the Turks, who, in every other respect, were abandoned to Muscovite ambition. But the tender point had been touched—the chord which jarred in the hearts of each struck; and the inestimable prize formed the secret subject of hostility, which, as much as jealousy of English power, afterwards led the French legions to Borodino and the Kremlin.¹

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¹ Thib. vii.
76, 78.
Hard. x. 239,
245. Bout.
i. 34, 35.
Jom. iii. 86.
Las Cas. iv.
232, 233.
O'Meara, i.
282. Bign.
vii. 425.

Immediately after the conference at Erfurth, a formal treaty was concluded with Prussia, by which the alleviations to her miseries provided for by the arbiters of Europe were reduced to writing; and in a short time the evacuation of the Prussian states, with the exception of the three retained fortresses, took place. Restored by this removal, and the recovery of the right of collecting his revenue, in a certain degree to his rank of an independent sovereign, Frederick-William, in company with his beautiful Queen, returned to the capital, and made his public entry into Berlin amidst the transports and tears of his subjects. The results of the secret conference at Erfurth soon developed themselves. Murat was declared by Napoleon King of Naples and Sicily; and, leaving the theatre of his sanguinary measures and rash hostility in the Peninsula, hastened to take possession of his newly acquired dominions. He was received with universal joy by the inconstant people, who seemed equally delighted with any sovereign sent to them by the great northern conqueror. His entry into Naples was as great a scene of triumph, felicitations, and enthusiasm, as that of Joseph had been. Shortly afterwards, however, he gave proof of the vigour which was to attend at least his military operations, by a successful expedition against the island of Capri, which the English had held for three years,² but

13.
Treaty with
Prussia, and
Murat de-
clared King
of Naples.
Nov. 5.

Dec. 3.

² Montg. vi.
365. Mar-
tens, Sup. i.
106. Thib.
vii. 149.
Bot. iv. 237,
239.

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now yielded with a small garrison under Sir Hudson Lowe, which capitulated, and was sent back to England, to a vigorous and well-conceived attack from the French forces.

14.
Napoleon
returns to
Paris, and
sets out for
the Ebro.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

Oct. 29.

Nov. 3.

Secured by the conferences at Erfurth from all danger in his rear, Napoleon speedily returned to Paris; and, after presiding over the opening of the legislative assembly, then resolved, with his wonted vigour, to set out for the Pyrenees. He was determined by a sudden attack to disperse the Spanish armaments and capture Madrid, before either the English auxiliaries could acquire a solid footing in the Peninsula, or Austria could gain time to put in motion the extensive armaments she was preparing on the Danube. Leaving Paris in the end of October, he arrived at Bayonne on the 3d November, and immediately disposed his forces for active operations. The effect of the vigorous exertions which he had made to strengthen his armies in that quarter was now beginning to display itself. The fifty thousand soldiers who in the middle of August were concentrated on the Ebro, dejected by disaster, had swelled by the end of September, as if by enchantment, to ninety thousand men present under arms in Navarre, besides twenty thousand, under St Cyr, in Catalonia. This body, already so formidable, subsequently received vast accessions of force from the troops arriving from Germany, especially the Imperial Guard, and the corps of Soult, Ney, and Mortier, all of which were veterans from the Grand Army, confident in themselves, and inured to victory.¹

¹ Nap. i. 361,
363. Thib.
vii. 156.
Tor. ii. 119.

15.
Immense
force there
collected by
Napoleon.

During the whole of October, the road from Bayonne to Vitoria was crowded with horsemen and carriages; through every opening in the Pyrenees, foot-soldiers were pouring in endless multitudes to reinforce the grand muster in Navarre. Conformably to his general custom, Napoleon divided the whole army into eight corps, commanded by as many marshals, whose names, already rendered immortal in the rolls of fame, seemed a sure

presage to victory.* Their united force, when the Emperor took the field in the beginning of November, was not less than three hundred thousand men, of whom fully forty thousand were cavalry; and they comprehended above a hundred and twenty thousand of the Grand Army. After deducting the troops in Catalonia, and those which required to be maintained in garrison in the northern fortresses, and the sick and absent, at least a hundred and eighty thousand could be relied on for offensive operations on the Ebro. But the magnitude of this force, great as it was, constituted the least formidable part of its character. It was its incomparable discipline, spirit, and equipment, the skill and vigour of its officers, the docility and experience of its soldiers, the central and impregnable position which it occupied among the mountains of Navarre, and the unity of design which it was well known would soon be communicated to its operations by the consummate talents of Napoleon, which constituted its real strength, and rendered the friends of freedom in Europe justly fearful of the collision of such a host with the divided and inexperienced armies of the Spanish provinces.¹†

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¹ Tor. ii. 119.
Napier, i.
361, 362,
377. South.
ii. 386, 387.
Thib. vii.
150, 152.

These armies, though very numerous on paper, and in considerable strength in the field, were far from being in

* First corps, Victor, Duke of Belluno,	33,937
Second corps, Bessières, Duke of Istria, afterwards Soult, Duke of Dalmatia,	33,054
Third corps, Moncey, Duke of Corneghiano,	37,690
Fourth corps, Lefebvre, Duke of Dantzic,	25,984
Fifth corps, Mortier, Duke of Treviso,	26,713
Sixth corps, Ney, Duke of Elchingen,	38,033
Seventh corps, General St-Cyr in Catalonia,	42,107
Eighth corps, Junot, Duke of Abrantes,	25,730
Reserve, Napoleon in person,	42,382
On march from France,	14,060
	— — —
	319,690

† Before assuming the command of the army, Napoleon had said, in his opening address to the legislative body at Paris, "In a few days I shall set out to place myself at the head of my army, and, with the aid of God, crown at Madrid the King of Spain, and plant my eagles on the towers of Lisbon!"—*Discourse*, 25th Oct. 1808; *Moniteur*, 26th Oct. 1808; and THIB. vii. 86. And *Imperial Muster-Rolls*, NAPIER, i. 88, *Appendix*.

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16.

Positions
and strength
of the
Spaniards.

a situation, either from discipline, equipment, or position, to make head against so formidable an enemy. The Spanish troops were divided into three armies; that of the right under Palafox, consisting of eighteen thousand infantry and five hundred horse, occupied the country between Saragossa and Sanguessa, and was composed almost entirely of Aragonese. The centre, under Castanos, which boasted of the victors of Baylen in its ranks, was twenty-eight thousand strong, including thirteen hundred horse, and had thirty-six pieces of cannon; it lay at Tarazona and Agreda, right opposite to the centre of the French position. The left, under Blake, thirty thousand in number, almost entirely Galicians, but with hardly any cavalry, and only twenty-six guns, was stationed on the rocky mountains near Reynosa, from whence the Ebro takes its rise. Thus, seventy-four thousand infantry, and two thousand horse, with eighty-six guns, were all that the Spaniards could rely upon for immediate operations on the Ebro; for although considerable reserves were collecting in the rear, yet they were too far from the scene of action, and their discipline and equipment were not in a sufficient state of forwardness to permit of their either arriving in time at the theatre of conflict, or taking any useful part in it, if they were there.* Seventy thousand Spanish infantry and two thousand Spanish cavalry could never be considered a match for a hundred and fifty thousand French foot, and thirty thousand horse, even under the most favourable circumstances. Least of all could they be relied on, when the French occupied a central position, defended by almost inaccessible mountains, and

* These reserves were stated to be as follows; but they were all distant from the scene of action, and had, for the most part, hardly acquired the rudiments of the military art :—

Castilians at Segovia, about 150 miles in the rear,	12,000
Estremadurans at Talavera,	13,000
Andalusians in la Mancha,	14,000
Asturians in reserve at Llanes,	18,000

Total, 57,000

were guided by one commander of consummate abilities ; while their undisciplined antagonists, scattered over a circumference two hundred miles in length, and separated from each other by deep ravines, rapid rivers, and impassable ridges, were under the command of different and independent generals, jealous of each other, and gifted with comparatively moderate military talents.¹

The British forces, it is true, under Sir John Moore and Sir David Baird, were rapidly approaching the scene of action ; but their distance, notwithstanding all their efforts, was still such as to preclude the hope of their being in a situation to render any effectual assistance. Sir John Moore's forces, which set out on their march from Lisbon, as already mentioned, in the end of October, had broken, for the sake of procuring better roads for the artillery and waggon-train, into two columns ; and while the main body, under Sir John in person, followed the direct road by Abrantes, Almeida, and Ciudad Rodrigo, a lesser division, but with the reserve and most of the guns, took the more circuitous route by Elvas, Badajos, Talavera, and Madrid. It was not, however, till the 8th November that this heavily encumbered corps reached the Spanish frontier, and on the 27th of the same month that it crossed the Guadarrama mountains, before which time the fate of all the Spanish armies on the Ebro was sealed. Meanwhile, on the 11th, Sir John Moore himself crossed the Spanish frontier, and, on the 18th, had collected the bulk of his forces at Salamanca ; but Sir David Baird, who had landed at Corunna on the 13th October, had only, by great exertion, succeeded in reaching Astorga in Leon, four days' march from Salamanca, on the 20th November.²

Thus the British army, not in all more than thirty thousand strong, was split into three divisions, severally stationed at the Escorial, Salamanca, and Astorga, distant eighty or a hundred miles from each other, and without any common base or line of operations ; and the

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¹ Nap. i. 392,
393. Tor. ii.
103, 104.
Thib. vii.
152, 153.
Tor. ii. 180.

17.

March, position, and
strength of
the British
army.

Nov. 8.

Nov. 27.

Oct. 13.

² Nap. i. 425,
431. Lond.
i. 181, 185.
South. ii.
470.

18.

Deplorable
division of
the British
and Spanish
troops.

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Spaniards, a hundred miles further in advance, were also divided into three armies, separated by like distances from each other; while Napoleon lay with a hundred and eighty thousand veteran troops clustered round the basin of Vitoria. It was easy to see that the allies, exhibiting in this respect a melancholy contrast to their antagonists, were but novices in the art of war, and signally ignorant of the importance of time in its combinations; and that the English in particular, inheriting too much of the character of their Saxon ancestors, were, like Athelstane the Unready, still unprepared to strike till the moment for decisive operations had passed.^{1*}

¹ South. ii.
470. Nap. i.
425, 431.
Lond. i. 181,
189.

19.
Movements
on the
French right
before the
arrival of
Napoleon.

Napoleon, who was well aware of the importance of striking a decisive blow in the outset, and dispersing the Spanish armies in his front, before the warlike and disciplined reserve of the English troops could arrive at the scene of action, lost no time, after his arrival on the

* These observations apply to those having the general direction of the Allied campaign, and especially the English government, who, at this period, were far from being adequately impressed with the vital importance of time in war. Their instructions for the campaign were dated so late as October 6. Both the gallant generals intrusted with the direction of the English army pressed forward with all imaginable expedition after they received them; and Sir John Moore in particular, as it will appear in the sequel, with mournful resolution, began an important advance under circumstances which, to all but a soldier of honour, were utterly desperate. It was impossible for him to commence operations before the junction with Sir David Baird, which did not take place till the end of November. But still, in all concerned, there was at this period an evident want of the vigour and expedition requisite for success in war. Napoleon would never have permitted the main English army to have lingered inactive at Lisbon from the end of August, when the Convention of Cintra was concluded, till the middle of October, when the march for Spain commenced, nor delayed the British expedition under Sir David Baird till it reached the Spanish shores for the first time on the 13th of that month. But these were the faults of government. The greatest error, in a military point of view, of Sir John Moore, was separating the artillery from the infantry and cavalry in the advance into Spain. For this oblivion of the first rule of military movements, viz. to station each portion of the army so that its different arms may, in case of need, support and aid each other, it is hardly possible to find any excuse. It is difficult to conceive how the direct road by Almeida could at that period have been impassable for artillery and waggons, when it had so recently before been traversed by Junot with all his army, and was ever after the great line of military communication which the Duke of Wellington made use of from the capital to the frontier; and, at any rate, if the passage at that period was impracticable for the guns, that might have been a good reason for

Bidassoa, in pressing forward the most active operations. Some inconsiderable actions had, before his arrival, taken place on the French right, where Blake had, since the 18th September, been engaged in an offensive movement, from which no material results had ensued. Prior to this, the French had evacuated Burgos and Tudela, and extended themselves towards Bilbao, which they still held much against the will of Napoleon, who strongly censured such a proceeding, as gaining nothing in strength of position, and losing much in moral influence.* Blake broke up from Reynosa on the 18th September with thirty thousand Galicians, and advanced to Santander. The effect of this movement was to make the French concentrate their forces in the basin of Vitoria; and Blake attacked Bilbao with fifteen thousand men, which fell the day after it was invested; while the French withdrew up the valley of Durango, and all the lateral valleys in its vicinity, to the higher parts of the mountains of Navarre. But though

Sept. 18.

Sept. 23.

sending the whole army round by Elvas, but it could be none for separating it into two parts, severed by two hundred miles from each other, and exposing either to the chance of destruction, when the other was not at hand to lend it any support. Colonel Napier, much to his credit, admits that this separation violated a great military principle, though he endeavours to defend it in that particular case as unattended with danger. It will appear in the sequel, that the greatest commanders sometimes unnecessarily fall into a similar forgetfulness; and that the cantoning the English infantry apart from the cavalry and artillery on the Flemish frontier, and within the reach of the enemy's attack, in 1815, had wellnigh induced a serious disaster at Quatre-Bras.—See NAPIER, i. 334, and *Infra*.

* “The line of the Ebro,” says Napoleon, “was actually taken; it must be kept. To advance from that river without an object would create indecision; but why evacuate Burgos—why abandon Tudela? Both were of importance, both politically and morally; the latter as commanding a stone bridge and the canal of Saragossa; the former as the capital of a province, the centre of many communications, a town of great fame, and of relative value to the French army. If occupied in force, it would threaten Palencia, Valladolid, even Madrid itself. If the enemy occupies Burgos, Logrono, and Tudela, the French army will be in a pitiful situation.” It is remarkable how early the experienced eye of the French Emperor, at the distance of three hundred leagues from the scene of action, discerned the military importance of Burgos—a town then unknown to military fame; but the value of which was afterwards so strongly felt by the Duke of Wellington, that he strained every nerve, and exposed himself to imminent risk in the close of the brilliant campaign of 1812, in the unsuccessful attempt to effect its reduction. See *Note, Sur les Affaires d'Espagne, August 1808, taken at Vitoria*; NAPIER, *App.* No. iv. p. 18.

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these operations were at first successful, yet the natural effects of the presumption and want of foresight of the Spanish government and generals soon developed itself. Blake had engaged in this laborious and dangerous mountain-warfare without magazine stores or any base of operations, and with only seventy rounds of ammunition for each gun. His men, when the winter was approaching and the snow beginning to fall, were without greatcoats, and many without shoes; and the bulk of the enemy's forces being grouped around Burgos, exposed his right flank to successful attack.¹

¹ Nap. i. 343,
369. South.
i. 387, 689.
Tor. ii. 104,
105.

20.
Check of
Castanos at
Logrono.
Oct. 27.

A combined attack had been arranged between the Spanish generals, along the whole circumference which they occupied, upon the central mountain position of the French army. But such a complicated movement, difficult and hazardous even with the best disciplined troops, when acting along such an extensive and rugged line of country, was altogether hopeless with the disorderly and ill-appointed bands of the Peninsular patriots. An attack by Castanos, with the Andalusian army, upon the French posts on the Ebro around Logrono, though at the first attended with some success, at length terminated in disaster; and the Spanish division of Pignatelli was driven back with the loss of all its artillery, and immediately dispersed. Discouraged by this check, Castanos fell back to Calahorra; and dissensions, threatening very serious consequences, broke out between that general and Palafox, who retired with the Aragonese levies towards Saragossa. Meanwhile Blake, whose forces, from the junction of the troops under Romana, which had come up from Corunna, and the Asturians, with whom he was in communication near Santander, were increased to nearly fifty thousand men, commenced a forward movement on the French left in the Biscayan provinces, and, stretching himself out by the sea-coast, and up the valley of Durango, threatened to interpose between the advanced divisions of Lefebvre and Ney's corps,² which lay most

² Tor. ii. 110,
113. Nap. i.
368.

exposed, and their communication with the French frontier on the Bidassoa.

This offensive movement was well conceived, and, if conducted and followed up with the requisite vigour, might have led to great results. As it was, however, his forces were so scattered, that though thirty-six thousand were under his immediate orders, only seventeen thousand were collected by Blake in front of the enemy, without any artillery, in the valley of Durango; the remainder being stretched inactive along the sea-coast, or separated from the main body by impassable mountain ridges. Alarmed, however, by the probable consequence of the interposition of such a force between the bulk of his troops and their communications with Bayonne and San Sebastian, Lefebvre resolved to make a general attack upon the enemy, and drive them back to the neighbourhood of Bilbao. Descending from the heights of Durango, under cover of a thick fog, he suddenly attacked the Spanish army at daybreak on the 31st October, with such vigour that the divisions in front were thrown back on those in the rear, and the whole driven in utter confusion to Bilbao, from whence they continued their retreat in the night to Balmaseda, in the direction of the Asturias. Lefebvre followed them next day; but Blake having assembled his troops, turned upon his pursuers, and, after some sharp partial engagements, the French retired to Bilbao, of which they were allowed to retain undisturbed possession.¹

Matters were in this state in Navarre and Biscay, when Napoleon arrived at Vitoria, and instantly, as if by an electric shock, communicated his own unequalled energy to the operations of the army. Disapproving of Lefebvre's unsupported attack upon Blake, which promised merely to force him back from the scene of action, without effecting those decisive results which his presence usually occasioned and which he then required, he instantly gave orders for the most vigorous operations. The posi-

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21.

Defeat of
Blake at
Durango.

Oct. 31.

¹ Tor. ii. 120,
123. Nap. i.
379, 381.

22.

Position of
the French
and Spanish
armies on
Napoleon's
arrival.

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tion of the Allied armies promised the greatest results to immediate attack. Blake, with twenty-five thousand defeated and starving mountaineers, was near Espinosa in Biscay ; the Conde de Belvidere, with the Estremaduran levies, twelve thousand strong, was in Burgos ; Castanos and Palafox, little dreaming of the danger which was approaching, were preparing to advance again towards Logrono, and confidently expected to drive the invaders over the Pyrenees ; while the English forces, slowly converging towards the scene of action, were still scattered, from Corunna to Madrid, over the half of Spain. Napoleon, on the other hand, had a hundred thousand excellent troops ready for immediate operations, within a circumference of twenty miles round his headquarters at Vitoria, besides nearly an equal force at a greater distance in Biscay and Navarre.¹

¹ Nap. i. 385,
387. Tor. ii.
124, 125.

23.
Actions at
Espinosa,
Nov. 10.

The plans of the French Emperor were immediately formed. Blake, whose eyes were at length opened to the perilous situation in which he was placed, so far in advance, and cut off from all communication with the other Spanish armies, had retired to ESPINOSA, where he had concentrated nearly all his troops, including those which had come with Romana from the Baltic, in a very strong position ; while his reserves and park of artillery were stationed in the rear at Reynosa. He had now rejoined his artillery and reserve parks, and had collected twenty-five thousand men ; but his men, half-naked and in great part without shoes, were shivering from the inclemency of the weather, and exhausted by incessant marching and counter-marching, often without food, for fourteen days. In this state they were attacked on the forenoon of the 10th by Marshal Victor with twenty-five thousand men, while Lefebvre, with fifteen thousand, marched upon the Spanish line of retreat. Romana's infantry, posted in a wood on the right, at first made a gallant resistance, and not only was the action prolonged till nightfall, without any disadvantage, by those steady

veterans, but the Spanish centre, who were protected by the fire of a battery well posted, to which the French had no guns to oppose, had gained ground upon the enemy. Next morning, however, the result was very different. Victor, who had changed his columns of attack during the night, renewed the action at daybreak, and directed his efforts against the left, where the Asturian levies were posted. These gallant mountaineers, though almost starving, and but recently embodied, stood their ground bravely as long as their chiefs, Quiron, Acevedo, and Valdes, remained to head them. But the French, perceiving the influence which they exercised over the minds of their followers, sent forward some sharpshooters under cover of the rocks and thickets in front of the position, who speedily killed the first and severely wounded the two latter.¹

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Nov. 11.

¹Jom.ii.97,
98. Nap. i.
391, 392.
Tor. i. 126,
130.

Disheartened by this loss, the Asturians broke and fled.

Blake detached a column of grenadiers to support them, but instead of doing so, they were themselves overwhelmed by the torrent of fugitives, and swept along. In a short time the whole army disbanded, and rushed in the wildest disorder towards the river Trueba, which encircles the rear of the position.* Great numbers perished in the stream, which was deeply swollen with the rains of winter; those who reached the fords dispersed, and made the best of their way into their own provinces, carrying dismay into all parts of Galicia, Asturias, and Leon, where Romana afterwards contrived to rally ten thousand men. With difficulty Blake collected seven thousand men, with whom he fell back to Reynosa, where he endeavoured to make a stand, with the aid of his reserve artillery which was still stationed there: but this attempt only rendered his defeat in the end more complete. Soult, who, as well as Lefebvre, was

24.
Total defeat
of the Span-
iards at Rey-
nosa.
Nov. 13.

* Great part of the disasters of this defeat were owing to the injudicious selection of a position for battle with a river in the rear—another example, like that of the Russians at Friedland, of one of the most fatal errors which a general can commit.

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¹Tor. ii. 126,
135. Nap. i.
391, 393.
Jom. ii. 97.
98. South.
ii. 389, 393.

now upon his traces, despatched a large body of troops on the 10th, to cut him off from his retreat towards Leon : and upon the 13th he was attacked by the advanced guard of the former marshal, who displayed even more than his wonted vigour on the occasion, was completely routed, with the loss of his whole artillery and ammunition, and driven, with a few thousand miserable and spectre-looking followers, into the heart of the Asturian mountains. Meanwhile Bilbao, Santander, and the whole line of the intermediate sea-coast, with great stores landed at the latter port by the British, fell into the hands of the enemy.¹

25.
Battle of
Burgos, and
defeat of the
Spanish
centre.
Nov. 10.

While these decisive blows in a manner annihilated the Spanish left, an equally important stroke was delivered by Soult, who had now taken the command of the second corps, against the centre. It consisted of the army of Estremadura, under the Count de Belvidere, with which were united some of the bravest regular troops in Spain—in particular, the Spanish and Walloon Guards, two of the best appointed regiments of the line, and the Royal Carabineers—and the whole were completely equipped and clothed by the English government. It made, however, even less resistance than the undisciplined levies of Asturias and Galicia. The Spanish soldiers, eighteen thousand strong, of whom eleven thousand were regulars, were posted at Gamonal, in front of Burgos, with twenty pieces of cannon disposed along their front ; the right occupied a wood, the left the walled park of Villemer. The action commenced by General Lasalle, with the French horse, driving in the Spanish right, and threatening its flank, while Mouton, with a division of veterans, charged rapidly through the trees, and assailed their front : Bonnet followed closely with another division immediately in his rear. But such was the vigour and effect of Mouton's attack, that, before his support came up, the enemy broke and fled in utter confusion towards Burgos, pursued all the way by Bes-

sières' heavy dragoons, who did dreadful execution among the fugitives, and took all the guns which had been saved from the first attack. Don Juan de Henestrosa, who commanded the Spanish cavalry, to cover the retreat, charged this dreadful body of horse with more gallantry than success ; his dragoons, led by youths of the best families in Spain, were unable to withstand the shock of the French cuirassiers, and shared in the general rout. Two thousand Spaniards fell on the field, or in the pursuit ; all the artillery, consisting of twenty guns, with eight hundred prisoners, fell into the hands of the victors. The whole ammunition and stores of the army were taken in Burgos, which was given up to pillage, and the dispersion of the defeated troops was complete.¹

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¹ Nap. i. 389,
390. Jom. ii.
96. Tor. ii.
131, 132.
South. ii.
395, 396.

Burgos now became the centre of the Emperor's operations ; headquarters were established there on the 12th, and ten thousand light troops were despatched forward to scour the country, levy contributions, and diffuse a general terror of the French arms. Such was the consternation produced by their advance, that they traversed the open fields in every direction, without experiencing the slightest opposition. They swept over the plains of Leon as far as Benavente, Toro, and Tordesillas, spreading everywhere the triumphant proclamations of the Emperor, and boasting that, notwithstanding their utmost exertions, the French horsemen could not overtake the English army, which, abandoning its allies without striking a blow, was flying in disgrace to its ships. But while, by these incursions, the attention of the enemy was drawn to the side of Salamanca, the eyes of Napoleon were, in reality, turned in a different quarter ; and it was against Castanos and Palafox that the weight of his forces was directed. The position of the French army seemed to expose them to certain destruction ; for Ney's corps, which had been destined to act against the army of Estremadura at Burgos, being rendered disposable by its sudden destruction, was in a situation to make a circuit

26.
Movement
against Cas-
tanos and
Palafox.

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round their position, and cut them off from the line of retreat to New Castile and Madrid. That brave marshal, accordingly, reinforced by a division from the reserve, was directed to move from Aranda by Soria to Agreda, which was directly in their rear; while Lannes was despatched from Burgos, with two divisions of infantry and one of heavy cavalry from the reserve, to put himself at the head of Moncey's corps, and attack them in front.* Meanwhile Castanos, finding himself separated both from Belvidere's and Blake's army, with the destruction of which he was unacquainted, had adopted the extraordinary plan of forcing a passage through the French forces in his front, and marching by Concha-de-Harra and Soria to Burgos, where he was to annihilate the Emperor's reserves and rearguard, and thence pass on to Vitoria to co-operate with Blake in the destruction of the two corps in Biscay.¹

Nov. 21.
¹ Thib. vii.
160, 161.
Tor. ii. 138,
139. Nap. i.
395, 401.

27.
Positions of
the French
and Spanish
armies
before the
battle of
Tudela.

In the midst of these extravagant projects, the hand of fate was upon him. Marshal Ney, who left Aranda on the 19th, entered Soria on the 21st, upon which Castanos retreated towards TUDELA, which he reached on the evening of the 22d. There his army formed a junction with that of Aragon under Palafox, and their united forces amounted to thirty-nine thousand infantry, and four thousand cavalry, with forty guns. The generals of the armies of Andalusia and Aragon could not concur in any plan of common operations; Palafox contending strongly for the defence of Aragon, Castanos for the more prudent plan of retiring before the enemy. Nothing was as yet decided between these conflicting opinions, when it was announced from the outposts that the enemy were already upon them. In haste the troops were drawn up nearly on the ground which they occupied at

* In crossing a mountain range near Tolosa, the horse of Marshal Lannes fell with him, and he sustained several severe and dangerous bruises. He was cured in a very singular manner, by being wrapped in the warm skin of a newly slain sheep, and was able in two days to resume the command of the army.—
LARREY, *Memoires et Camp.* iv. 237.

the moment, which was along a range of inconsiderable hills, nearly six miles long, stretching from Tudela to Tarazona. The Aragonese, with Palafox, were on the right, leaning on Tudela; the Valencians and Castilians loosely scattered in the centre; the veterans of Andalusia, proud of the laurels of Baylen, on the left, stretching to Tarazona, which they occupied with three divisions, the flower of the army. Lannes, who commanded the French, and had concentrated thirty thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry, with sixty pieces of cannon, instantly perceived the weakness of the enemy's line, and prepared to pierce the long and feebly guarded front in the centre, where it was weakest, and composed of the most inexperienced troops, so as to separate altogether the army of Aragon from that of Andalusia.¹

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This well-conceived plan proved entirely successful. General Maurice Mathieu, with a strong body of infantry, and the whole cavalry under Lefebvre-Desnouettes, attacked the Valencians and Castilians in the centre with great vigour, and soon compelled them to give ground. But they were in their turn charged by the Spanish Guards, whom Castanos despatched to their assistance from the left, who threw the assailants into confusion; and the Spanish line in that quarter was gaining ground, when they were taken in flank by General Morlot, who had beaten back the Aragonese on the right, and now turned fiercely upon the enemy's centre. Aided by such powerful auxiliaries, Maurice-Mathieu and Lefebvre-Desnouettes regained the advantage, and in their turn drove back and threw into confusion the Valencians and Castilians, who had fallen into disorder from the length of the combat. The centre was speedily routed, and Lefebvre-Desnouettes, charging the right with vigour, drove them entirely off the field in confusion towards Saragossa. Meanwhile la Pena with the victors of Baylen, on the extreme left, had routed the French under la Grange, by whom he was opposed; but when following up their

¹Tor. ii. 133,
140. Jom.
ii. 98, 99.
Nap. i. 401,
404.

28.
Total defeat
of the
Spaniards.

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success in some disorder, and already confident of victory, the victors were suddenly met and broken by a solid mass of infantry which diverged from the victorious centre of the enemy. The other divisions of the army of Andalusia, three in number, and embracing twelve thousand soldiers, took no part in the action. They commenced their retreat, however, in good order, when it was evident the battle was lost; but some of the advanced troops of Ney's corps having appeared in the rear, from the side of Soria, and a powder-waggon having exploded by accident, the retreat became disorderly, and it was with some difficulty the guns were brought off. As it was, the separation of the Spanish armies was complete; fifteen thousand men, Aragonese, Valencians, and Castilians, had taken refuge in Saragossa, without either guns or ammunition-waggons. Twenty thousand, under Castanos, with all their artillery, fell back, comparatively in good order, to Calatayud, and were immediately ordered up by the Central Junta to Madrid to defend the capital. Five thousand were killed and wounded, or made prisoners on the field; the remainder, with twenty guns, dispersed in the pursuit, and were never more heard of. But if Napoleon's directions had been implicitly followed by Ney, who arrived at Soria on the 22d, and if, instead of remaining in that town, as he did, inactive for two days, he had advanced in the direction of Calatayud, he would have fallen perpendicularly on the retreating columns of Castanos, and totally destroyed them. This failure on the part of Ney excited great displeasure in Napoleon, (who had with reason calculated upon much greater results from the battle,) and was attended with important consequences on the future fortunes of the war.^{1*}

¹ Jom. ii. 99,
100. Tor. ii.
138, 142.
Nap. i. 401,
406. South.
ii. 399, 401.

* Colonel Napier says, "Palafox, with the right wing and centre, fled to Saragossa with such speed that some of the fugitives are said to have arrived there the same evening." It would be desirable that the authority on which this serious charge is made against Palafox should be given, as no foundation appears for it in the military authorities with which I am acquainted. Jomini

The battles of Espinosa, Burgos, and Tudela, were not only totally destructive of the Spanish armies in the north, but they rendered, by the dispersion of their forces with which they were attended, the approach to the capital a matter of ease to the French Emperor. Blake's troops, of which Romana had now assumed the command, had almost all dispersed, some into Asturias, others into Leon: and it was with the utmost difficulty that that gallant commander had rallied ten thousand of the starving fugitives, without either artillery, ammunition, or stores, in the rugged mountains from which the Ebro takes its rise; the remnant of the army of Estremadura, routed at Burgos, had fallen back, in the utmost confusion, towards the Guadarrama mountains; while Castanos, with the army of Andalusia, was driven off in a south-easterly direction to Calatayud, on the road to Valencia; and Palafox, with the levies of Aragon and Castile, had sought refuge behind the walls of Saragossa. Thus, the Spanish armies were not only individually and grievously weakened by the losses they had sustained, but so disjointed and severed, as to be incapable of acting in concert, or affording any support to each other; while Napoleon, at the head of a hundred thousand men, occupied a central position in the heart of them all, and was master of the great road leading direct to the capital.¹

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29.

Disorderly
and eccentric
retreat
of the Span-
ish armies
from the
Ebro.¹ Nap. i.
405, 406.
Jom. ii.
102. Tor.
ii. 141.

30.

Rapid and
concentrat-
ed advance
of the
French
armies to
Madrid.

It was in such circumstances that the genius of that great general, which never shone with such lustre as in the vigour and ability with which he followed up a beaten enemy, appeared most conspicuous. Abandoning the remains of Blake's army to Soult, and the care of watching the English troops to Lefebvre's corps, and directing Lannes to observe Saragossa and the discomfited but

says merely, that after the battle "Palafox took the road to Saragossa;" Toreno, "that Don Joseph Palafox in the morning (*des le matin*) resumed the route to Saragossa." Neither say anything about any of the Aragonese or Palafox himself having either *fled* to Saragossa, or arrived there at night.—See NAPIER, i. 403, 1st Ed.; TORENO, ii. 141; JOMINI, iii. 100.

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warlike multitude which it contained, while Ney was to press incessantly on Castanos, and drive him off, as far as possible, in an easterly direction, the Emperor himself, with the Imperial Guards, Victor's corps, and the reserve, at least sixty thousand strong, advanced towards Madrid. So skilfully were these various movements combined, that while each corps had the following up and destroying of its own peculiar antagonist in an especial manner intrusted to its care, the whole combined to protect and support the advance of the main body to the capital; Lefebvre covering its right flank, Ney its left, while Lannes and Soult secured and protected the rear, at the same time that they disposed of the remains of the Aragonese and Galician armies.¹

¹ Nap. i.
407. Jom.
i. 101, 102.
Tor. ii. 143,
144.

31.
Forcing of
the Somo-
sierra pass.

Departing from Aranda on the 28th, the Emperor arrived at the foot of the Somo-sierra pass on the morning of the 30th. Some field-works, hastily constructed at the summit of the pass, were garrisoned by a disorderly crowd, composed of the reserve of the divisions of Andalusia which had been sent forward from Madrid, with which were united the remains of the army of Estremadura; in all about twelve thousand men, with sixteen pieces of cannon, under the command of General San Juan. The guns swept the road along the whole ascent, which was long and very steep; and as it was inevitable that a very considerable time must be occupied by the troops in surmounting the toilsome ascent, a very serious loss was anticipated by the assailants. Preceded, however, by a cloud of sharpshooters, who covered the mountains on either side, a column of three regiments ascended the causeway, while as many assailed the position on its right, and a like number on its left. The fire, however, of the artillery on the summit was very violent, to which it was difficult to reply, as a thick fog, intermingled with smoke, hung over their line on the higher part of the ridge, on entering into which the French found themselves torn by a descending shower of balls from an

enemy whom they could not discern. The head of the column on the causeway was already arrested, and hesitation, as always ensues in such an event, was beginning to spread in the rear, when Napoleon, having rode to the bottom of the pass, at once ordered the Polish lancers and chasseurs of the Guard, under General Montbrun, to charge. Advancing up the steep ascent at a rapid pace, these brave men opened a way for themselves through the columns of infantry with which it was encumbered, and attacked the battery : the first squadrons, shattered by a terrible discharge, reeled and fell back ; but the next, galloping forward before the guns could be reloaded, dashed among the artillerymen, and carried the pieces. Meanwhile the Spanish infantry, stationed on either flank, retired, after discharging their muskets at the swarms of tirailleurs by whom they were assailed ; and the whole body, falling into confusion, soon fled in disorder to Segovia, where a small number only could be rallied by the efforts of their gallant leader, San Juan, who cut his way, sword in hand, through a body of Polish lancers by whom he was enveloped.¹

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¹Tor. ii. 145,
146. Nap. i.
409. Jom.
ii. 103.

Great was the dismay in the Spanish capital when the alarming intelligence arrived, early on the morning of the 1st December, that the Somo-sierra pass had been forced, and that Napoleon with his terrible legions was advancing with rapid strides against its defenceless walls. The Central Junta at Aranjuez, at the same time, heard of the disaster, and instantly fixing on Badajoz as their point of union, they set out with all imaginable haste for Talavera de la Reyna in different parties and by different roads, and were fortunate enough to arrive at their place of destination without accident. Meanwhile, the general government of Madrid was intrusted to a Provisional Junta, of which the Duke del Infantado was the head ; while the direction of its military defence was in the hands of Don Thomas de Morla, who had early taken a lead in the Cadiz insurrection, but whose subsequent vio-

32.
Prodigious
agitation at
Madrid.

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lation of faith to the prisoners taken at Baylen augured ill for the integrity with which he would discharge the arduous duties now intrusted to his care. The troops in the city consisted only of three hundred regular soldiers, with two battalions and a single squadron newly levied. Nevertheless, vigorous preparations were made for defence. Eight thousand muskets, and a still greater number of pikes, were hastily distributed from the arsenal to the people; heavy cannon were planted on the Retiro and principal streets; the pavement was torn up, barricades were constructed, and the most enthusiastic spirit pervaded the multitude. Ammunition was served out in abundance: but some of the cartridges were discovered to be filled with black sand instead of gunpowder—a discovery which, in the excited state of the inhabitants, proved fatal to the Marquis Perales, who was at the head of that department. He had formerly been the idol of the people; but, with their usual inconstancy, upon the first discovery of this fraud, originating probably in the cupidity of some inferior agent, a furious mob assailed his house, dragged him into the street, and there murdered him.¹

¹ South. ii.
409, 412.
Nap. i. 411,
414. Tor. ii.
149, 150.

33.
Capture of
the Retiro.
Dec. 2.

On the morning of the 2d, the advanced guards of the French arrived on the heights to the north of Madrid; and the Emperor, who was extremely desirous of gaining possession of the capital on the anniversary of his coronation, and of the battle of Austerlitz, immediately summoned it to surrender; but the proposal was indignantly rejected. On the same day the Duke del Infantado was fortunate enough to make his escape, under cover of a thick fog, and directed his steps to Guadalaxara, to join the army of Castanos, which had retreated in that direction. During the night the French infantry arrived in great strength around the capital, and on the following morning a thick fog overspread both the agitated multitude within, and the host without by which it was menaced. By degrees, however, the mist was dispelled by

Dec. 3.

the rays of the ascending sun, and the Emperor directed his columns of attack against the RETIRO, the heights of which completely commanded the city. A battery of thirty guns speedily made a practicable breach in its weak defences; and a French division, advancing to the assault, soon after rushed in, and made themselves masters of that important post. The agitation in Madrid now became excessive. Twenty thousand armed men were within its walls, agitated by furious passions, burning with individual ardour, but destitute of the organisation and discipline necessary for success against the formidable enemy by whom they were now assailed. The city presented the most frightful scene of disorder. Exasperated crowds filled the streets; strong barricades were erected in various quarters; the bells of two hundred churches rang together; a confused murmur, like the sound of a mighty cataract, was heard incessantly, even during the night, which was audible at the distance of miles from the capital. In the French lines, on the other hand, all was silent and orderly, and the step only of the passing sentinel broke the stillness—a striking image of the difference between the disorderly passions which agitate the populace, without being directed by superior intelligence to any useful end, and the experienced discipline which restrains an ardour not less powerful, till the moment for letting it loose with decisive effect has arrived.¹

But the possession of the Retiro, in a military point of view, is possession of Madrid; bombs from its heights can reach the farthest points of the city. Sensible of the impossibility of maintaining the defence, the Spanish authorities were deliberating on the expedience of proposing terms of capitulation, when a flag of truce arrived from Berthier, threatening the utmost severity of military execution if the signal of submission was not hoisted within two hours. Morla and Ivriarte were upon that despatched to the headquarters of the Emperor to negotiate the terms of surrender. He received the former

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1808.

¹ Tor. ii. 149,
152. Nap. i.
411, 415.
South. ii.
410, 414.
Jom. ii. 103.

34.
Capitula-
tion of
Madrid.

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with unusual sternness, and in just but cutting terms reproached him with his violation of good faith towards the unhappy prisoners taken at Baylen.* “Injustice and bad faith,” said he, “ever in the end recoil upon those who commit them.” Prophetic words! of the truth and universal application of which Napoleon himself, on the rock of St Helena, afterwards afforded a memorable example. Filled with consternation at the perilous predicament in which he was individually placed, from the well-founded resentment of the Emperor, and inspired with a sense of the necessity of appeasing the wrath of the conqueror by an immediate surrender, Morla returned to the city, and easily persuaded the majority of the junta that submission had become a matter of necessity. A few gallant men, with the Marquis Castellás and Viscount de Gaeta, disdaining to surrender, withdrew from the city during the night, and took the road for Estremadura. At daybreak the capitulation was signed, and by ten o’clock the principal points of the city were in the possession of the French troops.¹

Napoleon did not himself enter Madrid, but established his headquarters at Chamartin, in the neighbour-

* When Morla appeared before him, Napoleon addressed him in these words: “You in vain seek to shelter yourself under the name of the people; if you cannot now appease them, it is because you have formerly excited and misled them by your falsehoods. Return to Madrid, assemble the clergy, the magistrates, the principal inhabitants; tell them, that if by to-morrow morning at six o’clock the town has not surrendered, it will cease to exist. I neither will nor ought to withdraw my troops. You have massacred the unhappy French prisoners who fell into your hands: within these few days you have suffered two servants of the Russian ambassador to be dragged into the streets and murdered, because they were born in France. The unskilfulness and cowardice of a general had placed in your hands troops who had capitulated on the field of battle, and the capitulation was violated. What sort of a letter did you, M. Morla, write to the general who subscribed that capitulation?† It well became you to speak of pillage—you, who in Roussillon had carried off women, and divided them like booty among your soldiers. What right, besides, had you to hold such language? The capitulation expressly forbade it. What have the English done, who are far from piquing themselves on being strict observers of the law of nations?—they complained of the Convention of Cintra, but neverthe-

† Alluding to Morla’s letter to Dupont of 10th August 1808, in which he sought to vindicate the violation of the capitulation on the ground of the atrocities of which the French soldiers had been guilty.

Dec. 4.
¹ Tor. ii.
152, 155.
Thib. vii.
163, 165.
Nap. i. 413,
415. South.
ii. 414, 417.

hood of the capital, where he received the submission of the authorities, and fulminated his anathemas against the functionaries who had resisted or swerved from his government. In a short time everything wore the appearance of peace: the theatres were reopened; the shopkeepers displayed their tempting wares, secure in the discipline of the conquerors; the Prado and public walks were crowded with spectators. Numerous deputations, embracing some of the most wealthy and respectable inhabitants of Madrid, waited on the Emperor, and renewed their protestations of fidelity to his brother Joseph, who was established at the royal palace of Prado: it then appeared how completely and fatally the corruptions and enjoyments of opulence and civilised life disqualify men from acting a heroic part in defence of their country.* Measures of great severity were adopted against all the constituted authorities who, after having recognised Joseph as King of Spain, had joined the popular party. The Marquis de Simon, a Frenchman by birth, who had to the last prolonged the conflict after the capitulation had paralysed all general resistance, and was taken fighting bravely, when endeavouring to cut his way through at the gate of Fuencarral, was ordered

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35.

Napoleon's
measures for
the tranquil-
lising of
Spain.

less carried it into execution. To violate military conventions is to renounce civilisation, and put ourselves on a level with the Bedouins of the Desert. How can you now venture to demand a capitulation, you who have violated that of Baylen? See how injustice and bad faith ever recoil upon those who commit them. I had a fleet at Cadiz; it had come there as to an ally's harbour; and you directed against it the mortars of the town which you commanded. I had a Spanish army in my ranks, but I preferred allowing it to escape on board the English vessels, and hurling it from the rocks of Espinosa, to disarming it. I would rather have seven thousand additional enemies to combat than be wanting in good faith. Return to Madrid; I give you till to-morrow at ten: return then if you are the bearer of submission; if not, you and your troops shall be all put to the sword."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 165, 166. There can be no doubt that consciousness of his former breach of faith now paralysed Morla, and impelled him into a second act of pusillanimity, if not treachery, to his own countrymen; so true it is, in Napoleon's words, that "*injustice and bad faith ever recoil in the end upon those who commit them.*" Morla lingered out a few years, abhorred and shunned by all; he died as he had lived, devoured by remorse and sunk in misery.—See TORENO, ii. 155.

* Their number amounted to above *twelve hundred*, comprehending the most eminent and wealthy individuals of all classes in the metropolis.—JOM. iii. 105.

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Dec. 4.

Dec. 7.

to be shot. He owed his life to the intercession of his daughter, who threw herself at the Emperor's feet, and obtained from his clemency a commutation of the sentence. All the members of the Council of Castile who had declared that they had sworn allegiance to Joseph under jesuitical mental reservations, were dismissed, and ordered to be detained prisoners in their own houses. Nor were general measures wanting, calculated to reconcile the nation to the sway of the intrusive monarch. By a solemn decree, the Inquisition was abolished, and all its funds were directed to be applied towards the reduction of the public debt; feudal rights were suppressed; all personal restrictions and privileges declared at an end; the number of convents throughout the kingdom was at once reduced a third, and their inmates were turned adrift, while all novices were permitted to leave their places of seclusion. One-half of the proceeds of the estates of the suppressed convents was to be applied to the public debt, the other to the relief of the cities and towns which had suffered from the French invasion; and all the barriers between province and province, which had so long impeded the internal commerce of the kingdom, were declared at an end. A few days after, the Emperor fulminated a bulletin against the English government, which deserves to be recorded, from the singular contrast which its predictions exhibited to the future march of events with which his own destinies were so deeply interwoven.* Amidst these great designs, the attention of the Emperor was still fixed on the magnificent projects of

* ——— "As to the English armies, *I will chase them from the Peninsula.* Saragossa, Valencia, Seville, shall be reduced to subjection, either by persuasion or force of arms; there is no longer any obstacle which can long retard the execution of my wishes. *The Bourbons can never again reign in Europe;* the divisions in the royal family have been fomented by the English. It was not the old King Charles or his favourite whom the Duke del Infantado, the instrument of England, wished to overturn from the throne; his papers, recently taken, prove what the real object was; it was British preponderance which they wished to establish in Spain. Insensate project! which could have led to no other result but a war without end, and the shedding of oceans of blood. No power influenced by England can exist on the Continent; if there are any

internal improvement and embellishment which he had set on foot in France. The completion of the new road over Mont Cenis, "on such a scale as to render it secure, not only in reality but to the imagination;" the formation of a quay from the Corps Legislatif to the bridge of Jena at Paris; the urging forward of the numerous canals in the course of construction in France; vast additions to the harbour of la Spezzia in Italy, which he proposed to make "a second Toulon," continually occupied his attention. He constantly complained of the tardiness with which these public works were carried on, so little commensurate to the ardour of his impassioned mind. On the 21st December, the day before he quitted Madrid, he wrote a long letter to Champagny at Paris, urging him to hasten the introduction of the water of the canal of Ourcq into Paris, not only to replenish the Fontaine des Innocents, and other fountains already in activity, but to establish magnificent water-works in the Champs Elysées and gardens of the Tuileries, on such a scale as to be capable of representing naval engagements similar to those exhibited by the Emperors to the Roman populace. He gave, at the same time, proof of the greatness of his mind by orders to compose songs descriptive of the glory the Grand Army had acquired, and would acquire, and for a solemn translation of the heart of Vauban to the Invalides on the 26th May, the anniversary of the taking of Dantzic; and of its littleness, by two decrees banishing Madame de Stael and Madame de Chevreuse forty leagues from Paris.¹ The first might be a formidable

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¹ Thib. vii.
168, 170.
Tor. ii. 156,
158. South.
ii. 419, 420.
Bign. viii.
54, 115,
121, 133.

which desire it, their wish is insensate, and will sooner or later cause their ruin. "If you swear allegiance to my brother with sincerity and truth, without equivocation or mental reservation, I will relinquish all the rights which conquest has now afforded me, and make it my first object to conduct myself towards you as a faithful friend. The present generation may differ in opinion; too many passions have been brought into action; but your grandchildren will bless me as their regenerator: they will place among their memorable days that in which I appeared among them, and from those days will date the future prosperity of Spain."—NAPOLEON'S *Proclamation to the Spaniards*, December 7, 1808; JOMINI, iii. 108, 110.

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rival from her literary talent; the latter was a young and brilliant beauty, whose only fault was having let fall some heedless expressions in regard to the ladies of the new court.*

36.
Positions of
the French
corps in the
end of De-
cember.

Nor was the Emperor less actively employed during the fortnight that he remained at Madrid, in dispersing his armies so as to spread them over the greatest possible space, and complete in all the provinces that thorough conquest which had already been effected in the capital. Ney's corps, which had been brought up from Soria, was stationed at Madrid, under his own immediate control, with the Guards and reserve; Victor was advanced to Toledo, which, notwithstanding its expressed determination to hold out to the uttermost, opened its gates on the first summons; while his light cavalry scoured the plains of la Mancha, carrying devastation and terror to the foot of the Sierra Morena. Lefebvre advanced to Talavera, on the great road for Badajos and Elvas; Soult was reposing on the banks of the Carrion, preparing to follow the broken remains of Romana's army into the fastnesses of Galicia; Junot's corps was broken up, and the divisions composing it were incorporated with Soult's troops; Moncey was ordered up to Madrid for an expedition against Valencia; while Mortier was directed to advance to support his corps, which was occupied with the siege of Saragossa. Thus the Emperor, from his central position at Madrid, was preparing expeditions to subdue the insurrection at once in Andalusia, Estremadura, Galicia, Valencia, and Aragon; governed in these measures by his favourite maxim, which had been acted upon with such fatal effect against the Prussians after the battle of Jena, that the true secret of war is to con-

* This last act of severity was so unjustifiable, that it excited the inquietude even of Napoleon's ministers.—“On n'est plus libre,” said M. Daru, “quand on peut être exilé. On trouve qu'un pareil ordre ressemble beaucoup à un lettre-de-cachet.” “Oui,” repliqua Napoleon, “vous avez raison pour d'autres, mais à la cour, dans le service de la cour de la liberté. *Est-ce que la liberté est faite pour les Chambillons?*”—BIGNON, viii. 137, 138.

centrate when a decisive blow is to be struck, but to disperse when the broken remains of the enemy are to be pursued, and the moral effect of victory is to be magnified by the numerous minor successes by which it is followed.

Vast as such a plan of operations undoubtedly was, it was not disproportioned to the resources of the Emperor; for the imperial muster-rolls, on 10th October, showed in the Peninsula the enormous number of three hundred and thirty thousand men and sixty thousand horse, of whom no less than two hundred and fifty thousand were present with the eagles and with their regiments, and the losses since sustained had been more than counterbalanced by the reinforcements received. Thus, after making every allowance for the troops requisite for garrisons and communications, at least a hundred and sixty thousand were disposable for active operations, or above thirty thousand men could be directed against each of the provinces menaced with an attack.¹* The disorganised condition of the Spanish armies, the deplorable state of destitution to which they were reduced, the vast distance which separated them from each other, and the want of any efficient central government to combine their operations, rendered it too probable that this vigorous and unrelenting system of conquest would be attended with the desired effect. There was every reason to fear that the national resistance of the Spaniards would, in the first moments of consternation consequent on their disasters, be speedily suppressed in all the provinces; when the career of victory was arrested from a quarter whence it was least expected, and by an enemy who had been hitherto almost forgotten, from the mistaken view which the Emperor entertained of their prowess.²

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37.
Vast forces
at the dis-
posal of the
Emperor.

¹ Imperial
Muster-
Rolls, Nap.
i. App. 28.

² Nap. i.
421, 422.
Jom.iii.104.
Tor. ii. 166,
172.

* Eight corps, as on p. 571,	319,690
Of whom were present under arms,	247,834
Horses,	56,567
Detached,	32,536
In hospital,	37,419

—See *Imperial Muster-Rolls*; NAPIER, i. p. 88, *App.*

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38.
Bold ad-
vance of
Sir John
Moore.

Nov. 29.

While these disasters were accumulating on the Spanish monarchy, the English army, unobserved and unassailed, had at length been concentrating its forces. Baird had come up from Corunna, Hope from the Escorial; and Sir John Moore found himself at the head of nearly thirty thousand men, of whom above two thousand were cavalry in admirable condition, and sixty pieces of cannon.* The English general was for long extremely perplexed what to do, in consequence of the imperfect information which he received, and between the plans advocated to him by Mr Frere, the British ambassador at Madrid, who strongly urged an immediate advance to the capital, and the evidence which the progress of events around him was daily affording of the utter incapacity of the Spanish troops to contend with the formidable legions of Napoleon. At one time the intelligence of the successive rout of all the Spanish armies appeared so alarming, that orders were given to the troops to retreat, and Sir David Baird's heavy baggage, which was coming up from Lugo to Astorga, commenced a retrograde movement to the former place. This determination excited the utmost dissatisfaction among the troops; officers and men loudly and openly murmured against such a resolution, and declared it

* The British army, however, had its full proportion of that usual drawback upon all armies, the difference between the actual numbers appearing on the muster-rolls, and the efficient force that could really be brought into the field. The following is the strength of the British army from the Adjutant-general's state, 19th December 1808:—

Fit for Duty.	In Hospital.	Detached.	Total.
Cavalry, . . . 2,278	182	794	3,254
Infantry, . . . 22,332	3,786	893	26,871
Artillery, . . . 1,358	97		1,455
Total, 25,858	4,035	1,687	31,588

Two thousand two hundred and seventy-five were left in Portugal, or were on the march between Lugo and Villa-Franca, and must be deducted from this number.—See NAPIER, i. 83, *App.*

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would be better to sacrifice half the army than retire from so fair a field without striking a blow for the allies who had staked their all in the common cause. The gallant spirit of the general himself secretly recoiled from the mournful resolution, which nothing had made him adopt but an imperious sense of duty to the troops intrusted to his care, the gloomy forebodings consequent on the overwhelming strength of the enemy, and the defeat and dispersion of all the Spanish forces who had attempted to arrest his progress.¹

¹ Lond. i.
217, 220.
Tor. i. 178.
Nap. i. 435,
440.

These feelings, both in the general and the soldiers, were wrought up to the highest degree when intelligence was received, shortly after the advance of the French to Madrid, of the enthusiastic preparations made for the defence of the capital, and the determination of the inhabitants to bury themselves under its ruins rather than submit to the invader. Giving vent joyfully to the native courage of his disposition, as well as the loudly expressed wishes of the army, Sir John Moore now sent orders to Sir David Baird to suspend his retreat, and, to the infinite joy of the troops, directions were given, indicating a disposition to advance. These preparations were not relaxed, although Colonel Graham, the future hero of Barossa, returned on the 9th with the disheartening intelligence of the capture of the Retiro, and perilous situation of Madrid. The British general knew that his countrymen looked to him for some great exploit; and, though fully aware of the danger of such a step, he resolved to throw himself upon the enemy's communications, and menace Soult, who, with fifteen thousand men, lay exposed to his blows in the valley of the Carrion. The gallant resolution was no sooner taken than it was acted upon; two days after, the British army, completely concentrated, commenced its advance, and Moore, with twenty-five thousand effective men around his banners, ventured to try his fortune against Napoleon, who had two hundred thousand under his command.²

39.
Determination of Moore to advance, and joy which it diffused through the army.

Dec. 5.

Dec. 9.

Dec. 11.
² Nap. i.
435, 451.
Lond. i.
217, 233.
Moore's
Camp. in
Spain, 187,
194. Tor. i.
178, 182.

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40.

Advance to
Sahagun, on
the French
line of com-
munication.

The forward march of the English forces, however, was combined, as prudence, and indeed necessity, dictated, with preparations for a retreat; and as it was uncertain which line would be adopted, magazines were formed both on the great road to Lisbon and at Benavente, Astorga, and Lugo, in the direction of Galicia. On the 13th, headquarters reached Relaejos, and the advanced posts of cavalry extended to Rueda, at which place they surprised a French post and made eighty prisoners. Great was the astonishment of these haughty conquerors at finding themselves thus assailed by an enemy, whom the boastful proclamations of the Emperor had led them to believe to be in full retreat for his ships.

Dec. 14.

At first Sir John's march was directed towards Valladolid, in order to facilitate the junction with Baird's corps; but an intercepted despatch from Napoleon on the 14th having made him acquainted with the fall of Madrid, and the unsuspecting security in which Soult's corps lay in the valley of the Carrion, the columns were moved towards Toro and Benavente, and Valderas was assigned as the point of junction for the two armies.¹

Dec. 16.

¹ Nap. i.
450, 454.
Tor. ii. 177,
182. Lond.
i. 212.

At Toro, where headquarters were on the 16th, information was received that Romana, who had been informed of the movement, and invited to co-operate in it, instead of doing so, was, in consequence of the retrograde movement of Sir David Baird a few days before, in full retreat towards the Galician mountains: the truth was, his troops, from hunger, fatigue, and misery, had dwindled away to eight thousand ragged and disheartened fugitives, totally unfit to take the field with regular forces, and whom he was even ashamed to array by their side.

Dec. 20.

Notwithstanding this disappointment, the English forces continued to advance; on the 20th, the junction between

Dec. 21.

Sir David Baird and Sir John Moore was fully effected at Moyorga; and on the 21st the united forces were established at Sahagun, near which town Lord Paget, afterwards Marquis of Anglesea, at the head of the 10th

41.
Prepara-
tions for
attacking
Soult on
the Carrion.

and 15th hussars, not above four hundred strong, fell in with, and after a short but brilliant action, totally defeated a body of seven hundred French cavalry, making two colonels and one hundred and sixty men prisoners in twenty minutes. Soult, now seriously alarmed, hastily called in his detachments from all quarters, and with some difficulty concentrated eighteen thousand men on the banks of the Carrion and between that and Saldana, where Moore was making preparations for attacking him on the 23d.¹

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¹ Tor. ii.
178, 187.
Nap. i. 450,
461. Lond.
i. 212, 243.

Never was more completely evinced than on this occasion the prophetic sagacity of the saying of Napoleon seven months before, that a victory by the allies on the plains of Leon would arrest every French army in the Peninsula. No sooner was the advance of Sir John Moore known at Madrid, than it instantly paralysed the movements of the whole French armies in the south of Spain. Napoleon immediately despatched orders in all directions to suspend the expeditions into the different provinces which were in preparation. Milhaud's and Lasalle's cuirassiers were arrested at Talavera; Victor's advanced guards were recalled from la Mancha; the expedition against Valencia was abandoned, the preparations against Saragossa suspended; and fifty thousand men, under the Emperor in person, including the Imperial Guards, the whole of Ney's corps, and great part of the reserve, the flower of the army, were, at a few hours' notice, suddenly marched off in the direction of the Somo-sierra.²

42.
This movement instantly paralyses the further advance of the French to the south.

² Jom. ii.
113. Tor.
ii. 187. Nap.
i. 461.

On the evening of the 22d, they were at the foot of the Guadarrama Pass; but a violent hurricane of wind and snow enveloped the higher parts of the mountains, where the thermometer was at 10° below zero of Reaumur; * and the general in command of the advanced guard, after twelve hours of fruitless toil, reported that the passage was impracticable. The conqueror of the St Bernard, however, was not so easily to be arrested. Napoleon in per-

43.
Rapid march of Napoleon with an overwhelming force towards the English.
Dec. 23.

* About 10° of Fahrenheit.

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Dec. 25.

Dec. 26.

son hastened to the advanced posts, and ordered the march to be continued without interruption, himself setting the example by pressing forward with the leading files on foot. The example animated the men to fresh exertions. Amidst storms of snow and sleet, which in the higher parts of the passage were truly frightful, the columns pressed on with ceaseless activity; and after two days of incessant labour the difficulties were surmounted, and the whole were collected on the northern side of the mountains, in the valley of the Douro. Urging on his troops with indefatigable activity, and riding even at that inclement season with the advanced posts in person, the Emperor soon arrived at the scene of action; on the 26th, headquarters were at Tordesillas, the cavalry at Valladolid, and Ney's corps at Rio-Seco. Fully anticipating the immediate destruction of the English army, from the immense force now brought to bear against them, Napoleon on the same day wrote to Soult,—“The advanced posts of the cavalry are already at Benavente; if the English remain another day in their position, they are undone; should they attack you with all their forces, retire a day's march to the rear—the further they advance the better for us: if they retreat, pursue them closely.”¹

¹ Thib. vii.
174, 175.
Tor. ii. 187,
189. Nap.
i. 461, 462.
Jom. ii. 113,
114.

44.
The English
retreat on
the line of
Galicia.

The march of Ney by Zamora and Rio-Seco towards Benavente was so directed that he early separated the British from their communication with Portugal; and if he could have reached the latter town before Sir John Moore, he would have cut him off from the line of retreat to Galicia also, and rendered the situation of the army all but desperate. This catastrophe, however, was prevented by the prudent foresight of the English commander, who, having received vague but alarming accounts of the march of a large French army from the south, suspended his advance on the 23d, and on the 24th commenced his retreat towards Galicia. Great was the mortification of the soldiers at this determination, for they were in the highest state of vigour and spirits, and an unbroken series

of brilliant successes at the outposts had produced an unbounded confidence in their own prowess, likely, if not met by overwhelming odds, to have led to the most important and glorious results. On the 26th, Baird's troops passed the Esla on their retreat, while Moore, who was with the rearguard to protect the passage of the stores and baggage over the bridge of Castro-Gonzalo, was threatened by a large body of Ney's horsemen. Lord Paget, however, with two squadrons of the 10th, charged and overthrew them, making a hundred prisoners, besides numbers killed and wounded. Indeed, the superiority of the English horse had become so apparent that they set all odds at defiance, never hesitated to attack the enemy's cavalry, though threefold in number, and had already made five hundred prisoners, during the few days they had been engaged in active operations.¹

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Dec. 26.

¹ Lond. i.
247, 253.
Nap. i. 462,
464. Tor.
i. 188, 189.

By this timely retreat, Sir John Moore reached Benavente before the enemy; and the hazardous operation of crossing the Esla, then a roaring torrent swollen by melting snow, and over planks laid across the broken arches of the bridge of Castro, in the dark, was successfully performed by General Craufurd with the rearguard. The army remained two days at that place, reposing from its fatigues, under the shelter of its magnificent baronial castle, almost unequalled in Europe for extent and grandeur.* Discipline, however, had already become seriously

45.
Gallant action of light cavalry with the enemy, and capture of Lefebvre-Desnouettes.

* This splendid relic of feudal grandeur is thus described by an eloquent eyewitness, whose pictures, equally vivid in travels as in history, have given to prose all the colours of poetry. "The Castle of Benavente is one of the finest monuments of the age of chivalry; nothing in England approaches to it in magnificence. Berkeley, Raby, even Warwick, are poor fabrics in comparison. With Gothic grandeur it has the richness of Moorish decoration; open alcoves where Saracenic arches are supported by pillars of porphyry and granite; cloisters with fountains playing in their courts; jasper columns, and tessellated floors; niches all over, and seats in the walls, over-arched in various forms, and enriched with every grotesque adornment of gold and silver, and colours which are hardly less gorgeous. It belonged to the Duke of Ossuna, and the splendour of old times was still continued there. The extent of this magnificent structure may be estimated from this single circumstance, that two regiments, besides artillery, were quartered within its walls: they proved the most destructive enemies that had ever entered them; the officers, who

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Dec. 28.

relaxed during the retreat, though only of three days' duration, from Sahagun ; the spirit of the men had been surprisingly depressed by the thoughts of retiring before the enemy : the officers had, in a great degree, lost their authority, and disorders equally fatal to the army and inhabitants had already commenced. But these evils were accumulating only in the front part of the column, which was suffering merely under the fatigues of the march and the severity of the weather ; no decline of spirit or enterprise was perceptible in the rearguard, which was in presence of the enemy. Pickets of cavalry had been left to guard the fords of the Esla ; and on the 28th a body of six hundred horsemen of the Imperial Guard crossed over, and began to drive in the rearguard, stationed in that quarter to repel their incursions. Instantly these gallant horsemen made ready to oppose them, and though only two hundred in number, repeatedly faced about, and by successive charges, under Colonel Otway, retarded the advance of the enemy till assistance was at hand. At length, the enemy having been drawn sufficiently far into the plain, the 10th, who were formed, concealed by some houses, suddenly appeared, and advanced to the assistance of their brave comrades. At the joyful sight of the well-known plumes, the retiring horsemen wheeled about, a loud cheer was given, and the whole bore down at full speed upon the enemy.¹ The Imperial Guard, the flower of the French army, wreathed with the trophies of Austerlitz, were in an instant broken and

¹ Lond. i.
253, 256.
Nap. i. 467,
468. Tor. i.
189, 190.
Larry, iii.
127.

felt and admired the beauties of this venerable pile, attempted in vain to save it from devastation. Everything combustible was seized ; fires were lighted against the fine walls, and pictures of unknown value, the works, perhaps, of the greatest Spanish masters, were heaped together as fuel. Fortunately the archives of the family escaped."—SOUTHEY, i. 499.

In the midst of this disgraceful scene of unbridled license and military devastation, there is one trait of heroic presence of mind, which in some degree redeems the character of the British soldier. Several thousand infantry slept in the long galleries of an immense convent built round a square ; the horses of the cavalry and artillery, scarcely less numerous, were in the corridor below, so closely jammed together that no one could pass between them, and there was but one entrance. Two officers, returning at night from the bridge of Castro,

driven over the Esla, with the loss of a hundred and thirty killed, and seventy prisoners, among whom was their commander, General Lefebvre-Desnouettes.

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The destruction of the bridge of Castro-Gonzalo was so thoroughly effected, that it delayed for two days the advance of the French, who could not cross the stream at other points from its swollen state ; but at length, the arches having been restored, Bessières crossed on the 30th with nine thousand horsemen, and reached Benavente, which had been evacuated by the English on the same day. At the same time the bridge of Mansilla, guarded by Romana's troops, was forced by a charge of cavalry, and Soult, passing over, overspread the plains of Leon with his light horse, and captured the town of the same name, with great stores belonging to the Spanish government. The whole army, consisting of the Guards, reserve, Soult's and Ney's corps, in all seventy thousand strong, including ten thousand horse, and a hundred pieces of cannon, were, on the 1st January, united by the Emperor at Astorga. The union of so great a force, in that remote part of the Peninsula, was both the highest compliment that could be paid by that great general to the prowess of the English army, the clearest demonstration of the importance of the stroke threatened by its commander, and the strongest proof of the vigour and celerity with which, by long experience and admirable arrangements, the movements of the French troops could be effected. In ten days Napoleon had not only transported fifty thousand men from Madrid to Astorga, a distance of two hundred miles, but

46.
The Emperor continues the pursuit to Astorga.

Jan. 1, 1809.

being desirous of finding shelter for their men, entered the gate of this convent, and perceived with horror that a large window-shutter was on fire, and the flames were spreading to the rafters above, from whence a single spark falling on the straw under the horses would ignite the whole, and six thousand men and horses would inevitably perish. Without saying a word, one of them (Captain Lloyd of the 43d) made a sign to his companions to keep silence, and springing on the nearest horse, ran along the backs of the others till he reached the flaming shutter, which by great efforts he tore from its hinges and flung into the court-yard without giving any alarm ; which, in such circumstances, would have been hardly less destructive than the flames.—See *Life of a Sergeant*, p. 143 ; and NAPIER, i. 467.

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¹ Tor. ii.
189, 190.
Lond. i. 256,
259. Pelet,
Guerre de
1809, i. 47,
48.

crossed the Guadarrama range when enveloped in a frightful snow-storm, and the torrent of the Esla when swollen by wintry rains. In each of these operations more than a day's march had been lost, so that the advanced posts of his army at least had marched the astonishing number of twenty-five miles a-day when actually in motion, in the depth of winter—an instance of exertion almost unparalleled in modern times.¹*

47.
But thence
returns to
Paris.

At this place, however, Napoleon left them. On the road between Benavente and Astorga, when riding in pursuit at the gallop with the advanced posts, he was overtaken by a courier with despatches. He instantly dismounted, ordered a bivouac-fire to be lighted by the roadside, and, seating himself beside it on the ground, was soon so lost in thought as to be insensible to the snow which fell in thick flakes around him. They afforded ample subject for meditation; they contained authentic intelligence of the accession of Austria to the confederacy, and the rapid preparations which her armies were making for taking the field. On the spot, he wrote an order for calling into immediate activity the second levy of eighty thousand conscripts authorised by the senatus-consultum of 10th October preceding; and proceeding slowly and pensively on to Astorga, remained there for two days, writing innumerable despatches, and regulating at once the pursuit of the English army, the internal affairs of Spain, the organisation of the forces of the Rhenish Confederacy, and the development of the gigantic strength of France for the German war.² On

² Nap. i.
469, 473.
Tor. ii. 189,
195. Lond.
i. 256, 259.
Thib. vii.
176, 185.
Pellet,
Guerre
de 1809,
i. 47, 48.

* It has been greatly exceeded, however, in the same country in later times, though by a much smaller force. In December 1836, the Spanish General Gomez marched from the lines of St Roque in front of Gibraltar to Tudela on the Ebro: he left St Roque on the 24th November, and reached the Ebro on the 17th December, having repeatedly fought, and been driven to circuitous roads to avoid the enemy on the way. The distance was above five hundred miles, performed in twenty-five days. There is no such instance of sustained effort in modern times. Septimius Severus marched from Vienna to Rome, a distance of eight hundred miles, in forty days, or twenty miles a-day; but he had the glittering prospect of the empire to animate his exertions.—See *Ann. Reg.* 1836, 379, 380; and GIBBON, chap. iv.

the 3d he returned to Valladolid, where he remained three days, still indefatigably engaged in writing despatches, and then returned, with extraordinary celerity, by Burgos* and Bayonne, to Paris, where he arrived on the 23d. He took back his Guards, but sent on Soult and Ney with two divisions of the reserve, in all about sixty thousand men, to continue the pursuit of the English, who were falling back by rapid marches, and in great disorder, towards the Galician mountains.

The withdrawing of the Emperor, however, made no change in the vigour with which the pursuit of the English army was continued. Soult, who immediately pressed upon their retiring columns, had twenty thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry under his command; and though the British army was still nearly twenty thousand strong, yet the inclemency of the weather and rapidity of the retreat had in a great degree relaxed the bonds of discipline, and diminished the moral strength of the soldiers.† The rearguard, indeed, still with unabated resolution repelled the attacks of the enemy; but the other troops, who had not the excitement of combat, often sank under the rigour of the season, or yielded to the temptations of intemperance, which the extensive stores of wine along their line of march too readily afforded. The native and ineradicable vice of northern climates, drunkenness, here appeared in frightful colours. The great wine-vaults of Bembibre proved more fatal than the sword of the enemy; and when the gallant rearguard,

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48.
Sir John
Moore re-
tires to
Lugo.

* He is said to have ridden from Valladolid to Burgos, a distance of *thirty-five French leagues*, in five hours! This rapidity would appear incredible, were it not for the circumstance that the Emperor here had his saddle-horses arranged by divisions of nine each at every three or four leagues along the road, so that every eight or ten miles he found fresh relays of his own horses, which were in admirable condition. This was his usual practice wherever there appeared the least chance of his riding on horseback during his journeys. The remainder of the road to Paris he travelled in his carriage.—See THIBAUDEAU, vii. 194.

† Three thousand men, chiefly light troops, had been detached from the main body to Vigo, to facilitate the embarkation on which the English commander was already determined.—NAPIER, i. 473.

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which preserved its ranks unbroken, closed up the array, they had to force their way through a motley crowd of English and Spanish soldiers, stragglers and marauders, who reeled out of the houses in disgusting crowds, or lay stretched on the roadside an easy prey to the enemy's cavalry, which thundered in close pursuit. The condition of the army daily became more deplorable. The frost had been succeeded by a thaw; rain and sleet fell in torrents; the roads were almost broken up; the horses foundered at every step; the few artillery-waggons which had hitherto kept up fell one by one to the rear, and being immediately blown up to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands, gave melancholy token, by the sound of their explosions, of the work of destruction which was going on.¹

¹ Nap. i.
473, 478.
Tor. ii. 193
194. Lond.
i. 260, 267.

49.
Increasing
disorder of
the retreat.

Jan. 5.

The mountain-passes through which the retreat was conducted presented, indeed, in many places positions in which a few regiments might have arrested, for a time at least, on that single road, an army; but it was thought there was no use in contesting them, as the vastly superior numbers of the enemy, and the advancing columns of Ney's corps, were supposed to give the pursuers the power of speedily turning them on either flank. It is well known also to all really acquainted with war, that a mountainous region, in appearance the most defensible, is in reality often in the end the most indefensible of all districts, against a superior and enterprising enemy, led by a skilful general. Sir John Moore was constantly with the rear-guard, doing his utmost to arrest the disorders and protect the retiring columns; and at Villa-Franca a sharp skirmish ensued with the foremost of the pursuers, in which, though the French cavalry were at first successful, they were ultimately repulsed by a heavy fire from the British light troops, with the loss of several hundred men, including General Colbert, who fell while gallantly leading on the vanguard. In other quarters, however, the same discipline was not preserved. Disorders went on

accumulating with frightful rapidity along the whole line; and such was the general wreck of presence of mind or foresight, that at Nogales the military chest of the army, containing £25,000 in dollars, having stuck fast in the mud, the treasure was rolled in the cask in which it was contained over a precipitous descent, and became the prey of the peasantry, who picked it up at the bottom. All order or subordination was now at an end; the soldiers, exhausted by fatigue, or depressed by suffering, sank down in numbers on the wayside, and breathed their last, some with prayers, others with curses, on their lips. At last the army, in frightful disorder, reached Lugo, late on the evening of the 6th January.¹

Here, however, Sir John Moore halted, and in a proclamation issued next day, severely rebuked the insubordination of the troops, and announced his intention of offering battle to the enemy. The army, accordingly, was drawn up in a strong position, extending along a ridge of low hills, flanked on either side by precipitous rocks, from the mountains to the bed of the Minho; and it then speedily appeared that the preceding disorders of the march had at least not been owing to want of courage. Instantly, as if by enchantment, the confusion ceased; joyfully the men fell into their places, the stragglers came up from the rear; arms were cleaned, faces brightened, confidence was restored; and before the morning of the 8th nineteen thousand men stood in battle array, impatiently awaiting the attack of the enemy. Soult, however, declined the combat, though on that day he had seventeen thousand infantry, four thousand cavalry, and fifty pieces of artillery in line; and Moore, having gained his object of recruiting his troops, and having little food remaining in the stores of Lugo, broke up in the following night, and retired towards Corunna.²

The night was cold and tempestuous; a severe storm of wind and rain, mixed with sleet, burst upon the troops; and in the confusion of a nocturnal retreat, two divisions

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¹ Tor. ii.
194, 198.
Nap. i. 473.
481. Lond.
i. 260, 267.
South. ii.
504, 514.

50.
And offers
battle, which
is declined.

Jan. 8.

² Nap. i.
485, 486.
Tor. ii. 195,
196. Lond.
i. 270, 276.

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51.

Continues
the retreat
to Corunna.
Hardships
undergone
by the
troops.

Jan. 11.

lost their way, and complete disorganisation ensued, inso-
much that a large part of the army became little better
than a mass of stragglers, who were only prevented from
becoming the prey of the pursuers by the fortunate cir-
cumstance of none of his cavalry appearing in sight.
Order having, at daylight, been in some degree restored,
Sir John Moore collected the army into a solid mass, and
the retreat to Corunna was effected without further moles-
tation from the enemy, the night-march from Lugo having
gained to the British twelve hours' start of their pursuers,
which they were never afterwards able to regain. But
notwithstanding this, it was nearly as disorderly and
harassing as the preceding part had been. As the troops
successively arrived at the heights from whence the sea
was visible, and Corunna, with its white citadel and
towers, rose upon the view, all eyes were anxiously directed
to the bay, in hopes that the joyful sight of a friendly
fleet of transports might be seen; but the wide expanse
was deserted, and a few coasters and fishing-boats alone
were visible on the dreary main. Deeply did every one
then lament that a battle had not been fought long before;
and as the officers cast their eyes on the low sand-hills in
front of the ramparts of the town, on which they well
knew the contest for their embarkation must be sustained,
they thought with poignant regret of the innumerable
positions, a hundred times stronger, which, in the course
of the retreat, might have been taken up for the encounter.
Now, however, there was no alternative; the sea was in
their front, the enemy in their rear; fight they must to
secure the means of embarkation, be the position favour-
able or unfavourable.¹

¹ Tor. ii.
199, 200.
Lond. i. 278,
280. Nap.
i. 487.

52.
Arrival at
Corunna of
the troops
and the
transports
from Vigo
Bay.

The brigades, as they successively arrived, were passed
on into the town, and all the means which circumstances
would admit of were taken to strengthen the land defences,
which, though regular, were very weak. The inhabitants
cheerfully and honourably joined in the toil, though they
well knew, from the preparations which were going for-

ward, that an embarkation was intended. On the day following, two powder-magazines, at a short distance without the walls, containing four thousand barrels of powder, the gift of England, were blown up, with an explosion so terrific, that nothing in the whole course of the war approached to it. The scene resembled the sudden explosion of a volcano; the city was shaken to its foundations, the rocks torn from their bases, the sea was tossed as in a tempest, the earth shook for leagues around; while slowly arose in the air a huge black cloud, shooting forth dazzling light, from whence, at a great height, stones burst forth with a prodigious sound, and fell with a sharp rattle in all directions. A stillness yet more awful ensued, broken only by the hoarse and sullen lashing of the still agitated waves on the shore.* On the following day, the trans-
 ports from Vigo hove in sight, and soon after stood into the bay. Preparations were immediately made for the embarkation of the sick and wounded; the cavalry horses were almost all destroyed, and the greater part of the artillery, consisting of fifty-two pieces, put on board; eight British and four Spanish being only reserved for immediate use. Notwithstanding all the sufferings of the retreat, not one gun had been taken by the enemy.¹

Meanwhile the bulk of the army, still fourteen thousand strong, was drawn up with great care by Sir John Moore, on a range of heights, or rather of swelling knolls, which formed a sort of amphitheatre around the village of Elvina, at the distance of rather more than a mile from CORUNNA. Hope's division was on the left, its flank covered by the muddy stream of the Mero, commanding the road to Lugo; Baird's next, directly behind Elvina; then the rifles and Fraser's division, which watched the

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Jan. 12.

Jan. 13.

Jan. 14.

¹ Lond. i.
278, 279.
Tor. ii. 198,
199. Nap. i.
487, 488.

53.

Position of
the British
in front of
Corunna.

Atlas,
Plate 52.

* It is from Colonel Napier, an eyewitness, that this description is taken. Whoever has had the good fortune to see that most sublime of spectacles, an eruption of Vesuvius, will have no difficulty in giving implicit credit to the graphic truth of the picture. The author witnessed one in 1818, and the act of transcribing these lines recalls, in all its vividness, the thrilling recollection of the matchless scene.

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coast-road to St Jago, and was prepared to support any menaced point; General Paget, half a mile in the rear, with the reserve, at the village of Airis. The French, full twenty thousand strong, were posted on a higher semicircular ridge, sweeping round the lesser one occupied by the British at the distance of about a mile. Laborde's division was on the right, Merle's in the centre, Mermet's on the left; their light field-pieces were distributed along the front of the line; the dragoons, under Lahoussaye and Franceschi, to which the English had nothing to oppose, clustered to the left of the infantry, and menaced the British right flank, with a detachment under Lorges to the right; while a great battery of twelve heavy guns, advantageously posted on a steep eminence between their foot and horse, not twelve hundred yards from Baird's division, was prepared to carry devastation along the whole line. From the inactivity of the French army during the two preceding days, Sir John Moore had been led to imagine that they had no serious intention of disquieting his retreat; and preparations, on the 16th, were making for withdrawing the troops into the town as soon as the darkness would admit of its being done without observation. But, about noon, a general movement was seen along their whole line; and soon after, at two o'clock, their infantry, in four massy columns, was observed to be descending from the heights which they occupied, and advancing with a swift step towards the English position. Perceiving that the hour he had so long and so passionately wished for was at hand, Sir John Moore instantly galloped to the front; the troops everywhere stood to their arms, and deployed into line; while the French, according to custom, advanced in long and deep columns, preceded by a cloud of light troops.¹

¹ Nap. 487,
488. Tor. ii.
199, 200.
Lond. i. 278,
280. South.
519, 523.
Jom. iii.
116.

Their onset, as at Vimeira, and in all the subsequent actions of the war, was extremely impetuous. A cloud of skirmishers led the way, who drove in the English advanced posts with great vigour, and, in the confusion

of their retreat, made themselves masters of Elvina, directly in front of the centre. As they drew near to the British position they deployed into line, and it soon appeared that they extended greatly beyond its extreme right; but the 4th regiment, which was there stationed, noways discouraged by this alarming circumstance, threw back its right wing; and, presenting a front in two directions, in which attitude it advanced, was soon warmly engaged with the enemy. Highly delighted with this display of presence of mind, and deeming the right secure when intrusted to such intrepid defenders, Sir John Moore rode up to Baird's division in the centre, which had now come to blows with their opponents there, who, having carried Elvina, were bursting through the enclosures which lay between its houses and the British with loud cries and all the exultation of victory.¹

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54.

Battle of
Corunna.
Commence-
ment of the
action.

¹ Jom. iii.
117. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
372. Hope's
official Desp.
Nap. i. 494,
495. Tor.
ii. 116.

The action now became extremely warm along the whole line. The French and English centres advanced to within pistol-shot of each other; and after exchanging a few volleys, the 50th and 42d charged with the bayonet, and drove the enemy opposed to them in the most gallant style back again through Elvina, and a considerable way up the slope on the other side. But this furious onset being carried too far, and not adequately supported, met with a severe check. The victorious troops, when broken by the enclosures and stone-walls on the other side of the village, were assailed in their turn by fresh French regiments, and driven back a second time through its streets, Major Napier, who commanded the 50th, being wounded and made prisoner. But Moore was at hand to repair the disorder. Instantly addressing the 42d regiment with the animating words, "Highlanders, remember Egypt!" and bringing up a battalion of the Guards to its support, he again led them forward to the charge.² The shock was irresistible: borne back at the point of the bayonet, the enemy were again driven into Elvina, from whence, after a desperate struggle, they were finally expelled with

55.
Vehement
struggle in
the centre.

² General
Hope's ac-
count of the
battle. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
p. 428. Nap.
i. 494, 496.
Lond. i. 285,
286. Tor.
ii. 201, 202.

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great slaughter. In this decisive contest, however, Sir John Moore received a mortal wound from a cannon-shot ; and Sir David Baird, struck down at the head of his men, had been shortly before carried from the field in a senseless condition.

56.
Repulse of
the French.

Foiled in this attempt to pierce the centre, Soult renewed his attacks with Laborde's division on the left ; while a heavy column endeavoured to steal unperceived round the British right, where they so greatly outflanked their opponents. But the ground on the left being in favour of the English, all his efforts were defeated with comparative ease ; and General Hope, who commanded there, pressing forward in pursuit of the repulsed columns, carried the village of Palavio Abaxo, close under the enemy's original position, which remained in his hands at nightfall. At the same time, on the right, General Paget, with the reserve, not only at once perceived and advanced to meet the column which was endeavouring to turn his flank, but assailed it with such vigour, that it was thrown back upon Lahoussaye's dragoons, and the whole were driven in disorder to the foot of the hill on which the great battery was placed. When night, arriving in that wintry season at an early hour, separated the combatants, the enemy was not only repulsed at all points, but the British line was considerably in front of the ground they had occupied at the commencement of the action. They held, on the left, Palavio Abaxo ; in the centre, Elvina ; and on the right were advanced to the acclivity of the central battery. Had Fraser's troops, stationed on the coast-road to St Jago on the extreme right, been at hand to support this splendid advance of the reserve, and an hour more of daylight remained, the enemy would have been routed. Had the cavalry been on the field, or the horses not foundered, he would have been thrown back in irretrievable confusion on the swampy stream of the Mero, now flooded by the full tide, and traversed only by a single arch at El Burgo,

and totally annihilated. Night, however, having supervened when the success was still incomplete, and the means of embarking unmolested having been gained by the enemy's repulse, General Hope, upon whom the command had devolved, did not conceive himself warranted in making any change in the preparations for departure; and after dark the troops were withdrawn into the town, where they were all got on board without either confusion or delay.^{1*}

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¹ Hope's
Despatch,
Ann. Reg.
1809, p. 373.
Nap. i. 498,
499. Lond.
i. 287. Tor.
ii. 201, 202.

Sir John Moore received his death-wound while animating the 42d to the charge. A cannon-ball struck his left breast, and beat him down by its violence to the earth; but his countenance remained unchanged, not a sigh escaped his lips, and, sitting on the ground, he watched with an anxious and steadfast eye the progress of the battle. As it advanced, however, and it became manifest that the troops were gaining ground, his countenance brightened, and he reluctantly allowed himself to be carried to the rear. Then the dreadful nature of the wound appeared: the shoulder was shattered to pieces; the arm hanging by a film of skin, the breast and lungs almost laid open. Soon after, when the soldiers had placed him on a blanket to carry him from the field, the hilt of his sword was driven into the wound—an officer destined to celebrity in future times, CAPTAIN HARDINGE, attempted to take it off, but the dying hero exclaimed, "It is as well as it is; I had rather it should go off the field with me." He was carried by the soldiers towards the town, but though the pain of the wound soon became

57.
Mortal
wound of
Sir John
Moore.

* The British loss at Corunna was from 800 to 1000 men; that of the French was stated by their own officers to Colonel Napier at 3000; Sir John Hope estimated it at 1600, but it was at least 2000—a number which would doubtless appear surprisingly large, if the murderous effect of the fire of the British infantry, from the coolness and discipline of the men, were not decisively proved by every action throughout the war. The total loss of the army, during the retreat, was 4033, of whom 1397 were missing before the position at Lugo, and 2636 from that to the final embarkation of the army, including those who fell at Corunna. Of this number 800 stragglers contrived to escape into Portugal, and, being united with the sick left in that country, formed a corps of

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¹ Moore's
Narrative,
354, 371.
Nap. i. 499.

excessive, such was the serenity of his countenance, that those around him expressed a hope of his recovery. "No," said he, "I feel that is impossible." When approaching the ramparts, he several times desired his attendants to stop, and turn him round that he might again see the field of battle; and when the advance of the firing indicated that the British were successful, he expressed his satisfaction, and a smile overspread the features that were relaxing in death.¹

58.
His death.

The examination of his wound at his lodgings speedily cut off all hope of recovery; but he never for an instant lost his serenity of mind, and repeatedly expressed his satisfaction when he heard that the enemy were beaten. "You know," said he to his old friend Colonel Anderson, "that I always wished to die this way." He continued to converse in a calm and even cheerful voice, on the events of the day, inquiring after the safety of his friends and staff, and recommended several for promotion on account of their services during the retreat. "Stanhope," said he, observing Captain Stanhope, "remember me to your sister."^{*} Once only his voice faltered, as he spoke of his mother. Life was ebbing fast, and his strength was all but extinct, when he exclaimed, in words which will for ever thrill in every British heart,—"I hope the people of England will be satisfied: I hope my country will do me justice." Released in a few minutes after from his sufferings, he was wrapped by his attendants in his military cloak, and laid in a grave hastily formed on the ramparts of Corunna,² where a monument was soon after erected over his uncoffined remains by the gene-

² Moore's
Narrative,
354, 371.
Nap. i.
499, 500.

1876 men, which afterwards did good service, both at Oporto and Talavera. Six three-pounders which never were horsed were thrown over the rocks near Villa-Franca: the guns used at Corunna, twelve in number, were spiked and buried in the sand, but afterwards discovered by the enemy. Not one, from first to last, was taken in fight.—See the *General Returns* quoted in NAPIER, i. *App. No. 26*.

* The celebrated Lady Hester Stanhope, to whom he was engaged—the partner of Mr Pitt's counsels for many years, and since so well known for her romantic adventures in the East.

rosity of Marshal Ney. Not a word was spoken as the melancholy interment by torchlight took place ; silently they laid him in his grave, while the distant cannon of the battle fired the funeral honours to his memory.*

This tomb, originally erected by the French, since enlarged by the British, bears a simple but touching inscription,† worthy of the hero over whose remains it is placed. Few spots in Europe will ever be more the object of general interest. His very misfortunes were the means which procured him immortal fame—his disastrous retreat, bloody death, and finally his tomb on a foreign strand, far from kin and friends. “There is scarcely a Spaniard,” it has been eloquently said, “but has heard of this tomb, and speaks of it with a strange kind of awe. Immense treasures are said to have been buried with the heretic general, though for what purpose no one pretends to guess. The demon of the clouds, if we may trust the Gallegans, followed the English in their flight, and assailed them with water-spouts as they toiled up the steep winding paths of Fuencebadon ;¹ whilst legends the most wild are related of the manner

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59.
His grave,
and veneration with
which it is
regarded in
Spain.

¹ Borrow's
Bible in
Spain, i.
271.

* This touching scene will live for ever in the British heart, embalmed in the exquisite words of the poet :—

“ Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried ;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning ;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Nor in sheet nor in shroud we wound
him ;

But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow,

But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollow'd his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er
his head,
And we far away on the billow.

* * * * *
But half our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring ;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory ;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But left him alone with his glory.”

† “ JOHN MOORE,

LEADER OF THE ENGLISH ARMIES,

SLAIN IN BATTLE, 1809.”

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60.
Embarka-
tion of the
troops, and
their return
to England.
Jan. 17.

in which the stout soldier fell. Yes, even in Spain immortality has already crowned the head of Moore ;— Spain, the land of oblivion, where the Guadalete flows.”

On the fall of Sir John Moore, and the wound of Sir David Baird, the command devolved upon General Hope, who conducted the remaining arrangements with that decision and judgment which afterwards became so conspicuous in the Peninsular war, and whose eloquent despatch announcing the battle of Corunna and the death of Sir John Moore, agitated so profoundly the heart of his country.* The boats being all in readiness, the embarkation commenced at ten at night ; the troops were silently filed down to the beach, put on board with admirable order, and the whole, except the rearguard, reached the transports in safety before day. GENERAL BERESFORD, at the head of the rearguard, two thousand strong, and GENERAL HILL, who was stationed on the promontory behind the town, both destined to celebrity in future times, were the last to be withdrawn ; the latter did not embark till three o'clock in the afternoon of the following day. The French gave them no annoyance, so strongly had the bloody repulse of the preceding day inspired them with respect for British valour. With a courage and generosity worthy of the highest admiration, the Spaniards manned the ramparts when the last of the English forces were withdrawn, and prolonged the defence for several days, so as to allow the whole sick, wounded, artillery, stores, and even prisoners, to be brought away. A few guns placed by the French on the heights of San Lucia, without the walls, which could not be maintained, alone occasioned, by the fire which they opened upon the vessels in the bay, great

* “I need not expatiate on the loss which the army and his country have sustained by the death of Sir John Moore. His fall has deprived me of a valuable friend, to whom long experience of his worth had sincerely attached me. But it is chiefly on public grounds that I must lament the blow. It will be the conversation of every one who loved or respected his manly character, that after conducting the army through an arduous retreat with consummate firmness, he has terminated a career of distinguished honour, by a death that

confusion among the transports, but without doing any serious damage. At length the last of the long files of baggage and stragglers were got on board, and the English fleet amidst the tears of the inhabitants, stood to the northward, and was lost to the sight amidst the cold expanse of the watery main. Then, and not till then, the inhabitants of Corunna, feeling it in vain to prolong a defence which such a host had resigned in despair, and having honourably discharged every duty to their discomfited allies, capitulated to Marshal Soult, who, a few days afterwards, obtained possession, after a trifling resistance, of the important fortress of Ferrol, with seven sail of the line, and very extensive naval stores.¹

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¹ Tor. ii.
203, 205.
Nap. i. 498,
499. Lond.
i. 289, 291.
South. ii.
530, 531.

No words can convey an adequate idea of the gloom and despondency which prevailed in the British isles when intelligence of these events was received. In proportion to the warm and enthusiastic hopes which had been formed of a successful issue to the patriotic cause, had been the anxiety and interest which was felt when the crisis approached. In particular, when Napoleon, at the head of three hundred thousand chosen troops, burst through the Pyrenees, and the brave but undisciplined Spanish levies were brought in contact with his experienced veterans, the public anxiety became almost unbearable. The rout of Espinosa, the overthrow at Burgos, the defeat of Tudela, succeeding each other in rapid succession, were felt the more keenly, that the British nation had been led, by the exaggerations of the public journals, to form a most erroneous idea, both with regard to the strength of the Spanish and the force of the French armies. Most of all, they were misled by the pleasing

61.
Extreme
gloom which
these events
produce in
the British
isles.

has given the enemy additional reason to respect the name of a British soldier. Like the immortal Wolfe, he is snatched from his country at an early period of a life spent in her service; like Wolfe, his last moments were gilded by the prospect of success, and cheered by the acclamation of victory; like Wolfe, also, his memory will for ever remain sacred in that country which he sincerely loved, and which he had so faithfully served."—SIR JOHN HOPE to SIR DAVID BAIRD, *Jan.* 18, 1809; *Ann. Reg.* 1809, *App. to Chron.* 375.

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illusion, which the experience of every age has proved to be fallacious, but which is probably destined to the end of the world to deceive the enthusiastic portion of mankind, that a certain degree of popular excitement can supply the want of discipline and experience, and that general ardour is more to be relied on than organisation and conduct.

62.
Despair
which seized
the public
mind.

When, therefore, the Spanish levies, flushed with the triumphs of Baylen and Saragossa, were dissipated with more ease than the regular armies of Austria and Muscovy—when the Somo-sierra pass was stormed by a charge of lancers, and Madrid fell within three weeks after the campaign had been opened by Napoleon—a sort of despair seized the public mind, and nothing seemed now capable of withstanding a power which beat down with equal ease the regular forces of northern, and the enthusiastic levies of southern Europe. A transient gleam shot across the gloom when Sir John Moore advanced to Sahagun, and the English journals confidently announced that seventy thousand English and Spaniards were rapidly interposing between the Emperor and the French frontier, and would possibly make him prisoner in the capital he had won. Proportionally deeper was the gloom when this hope also proved fallacious, when Romana's forty thousand men dwindled into a few thousand starving wanderers, and the British army, instead of making Napoleon prisoner in the heart of Spain, was expelled, after a disastrous retreat, with the loss of its general, from the shores of the Peninsula.

63.
Horror excited by the
appearance
of the army
on its return.

The English had hitherto only known war in its holiday dress: their ideas of it were formed on the pomp of melodramatic representation, or the interest of pacific reviews; and though strongly impressed with a military spirit, they were, from their happy insular situation, strangers to the hardships and the calamities of actual campaigns. The inhabitants of the towns along the

Channel had seen the successive expeditions which composed Sir John Moore's army embark in all the pride of military display, with drums beating and colours flying, amidst the cheers and tears of a countless host of spectators. When, therefore, they beheld the same regiments return, now reduced to half their numbers, with haggard countenances, ragged accoutrements, and worn-out clothing, they were struck with astonishment and horror. This was soon increased and turned into well-founded alarm, by a malignant fever which the troops brought back with them, the result of fatigue, confinement on shipboard, and mental depression, and by the dismal and often exaggerated accounts which were spread by the survivors, of the hardships and miseries they had undergone. These gloomy narratives riveted every mind by a painful but enchaining interest: they speedily made their way into the public newspapers, and were devoured with unceasing interest by the whole people. The fate of these gallant men became a general subject of commiseration; and the old cry, raised for factious purposes, began to resound through the land, that England could never contend on the Continent with France, and that the only rational policy for the prosecution of the war was to withdraw entirely behind her wooden walls.¹

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¹ Ann. Reg.
1809, 22, 25.
Nap. i. 529.

And yet, to a dispassionate observer, it could not but be manifest, that though the campaign had to both parties been deeply checkered by misfortune, it had in reality been far more calamitous to the French than the Allies; and that the power of Napoleon had received a shock ruder than any which it had yet received since his accession to the supreme authority. The Spanish armies, it is true, had been dispersed on the Ebro, the Somo-sierra forced, Madrid taken, and the British, after a calamitous retreat, driven to their ships. But the Peninsula was still unsubdued. Saragossa was fortifying its blood-stained battlements: Catalonia was in arms:

64.
Reflections
on the cam-
paign; its
character
checkered,
but on the
whole emi-
nently un-
favourable
to France.

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Valencia and Andalusia were recruiting their forces : Portugal was untouched, and the British troops, though in diminished strength, still held the towers of Lisbon. No submission or subjugation had followed the irruption of three hundred thousand men into the Peninsula. Driven from their capital, the Spaniards, like their ancestors in the Roman and Moorish wars, were preparing in the provinces to maintain a separate warfare ; while the number of their fortresses and chains of mountains, joined to the aid of England, promised them the means of there prolonging a desperate resistance. And what had happened in the same campaign to the hitherto invincible arms of France? One whole corps had laid down its arms with unheard-of disgrace ; another had capitulated, and surrendered a kingdom to purchase its retreat ; foiled in more than one provincial expedition, the imperial arms had been driven from the capital behind the Ebro, and only regained their lost ground by denuding Germany of its defenders, and exposing for the sake of the Peninsular thrones the Rhine itself to invasion. The spell which held the world enchained had been broken ; the dangerous secret had been disclosed that the French armies were not invincible. Already the effects of the discovery had become manifest : Europe had been shaken from one extremity to the other by the Peninsular disasters, and Austria, which beheld unmoved the desperate strife of Pultusk and Eylau, encouraged by the immersion of the best French armies in the Peninsula, was preparing to renew the struggle on a scale of unprecedented magnitude.

65.
Reflections
on the cam-
paign, and
effect of
Sir John
Moore's
movement.

The movement in advance by Sir John Moore to Sahagun, his rapid subsequent retreat, when surrounded by superior forces, to Benavente, the skill with which he reorganised his shattered army at Lugo, and the firmness with which, disdaining every proposal for a capitulation,* he boldly fronted the enemy at Corunna, and

* It was seriously pressed upon his consideration by several officers, when

met a glorious death on the field of victory, are worthy of the highest admiration, and will for ever secure him a place in the temple of British heroes. Nor is it merely the fond partiality of national gratitude, often mistaken or exaggerated in its opinions, which has secured this distinction: a calm consideration of the consequences of his campaign must, with all impartial observers, lead to the same result. In the whole annals of the Revolutionary war, there is not to be found a single movement more ably conceived, or attended with more important consequences, than that which he attempted against Soult's corps on the Carrion. Levelled against the vital line of the enemy's communications, based on the principles which, unknown to the English general, Napoleon had so emphatically unfolded six months before in his secret despatch to Savary,¹ it had literally paralysed every hostile army in Spain; snatched the Spanish monarchy from the verge of destruction, when its own resources were exhausted; and by drawing Napoleon himself, with his terrible legions, into the northern extremity of the Peninsula, it both gave time to the southern provinces to restore their armies and arm their fortresses, and averted the war from Portugal, till an opportunity of organising fresh means of resistance within its frontiers was afforded. But for this bold and well-conceived advance, Andalusia would have been overrun, Valencia taken, Saragossa subdued, within a few weeks; and before the Emperor was recalled from the theatre of Peninsular warfare by the Austrian preparations, he would have realised his favourite threat of planting the French eagles on the towers of Lisbon. These great results, however, were attended with proportionate dangers: Napoleon, with seventy thousand chosen troops, was speedily sweeping round the audacious enemy who had thus interrupted his designs, and

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¹ *Ante*, ch.
liv. § 17,
note.

the absence of the transports on the first arrival at Corunna rendered it evident that a battle must be fought for the embarkation, but he indignantly rejected the proposal.—NAPIER, i. 492, 493; SOUTHEY, ii. 520.

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66.

Errors
which he
committed.¹ Nap. i.
474.

67.

Especially
in the un-
due rapidity
of the re-
treat.

but for the celerity and skill of the subsequent retreat to Astorga, the army which achieved them must certainly have been consigned to destruction.*

But if, in these particulars, the conduct of Sir John Moore was worthy of unqualified admiration, there are others in which the impartial voice of history must deal out a different measure of eulogium. Admitting that the celerity of the retreat to Astorga was unavoidable, and saved the army from destruction, where was the necessity for the subsequent forced marches to Lugo, when Napoleon had retired with his Guards from the pursuit, in dreadful weather, attended as it was with such ruinous effects upon the discipline and spirit of his troops? His ablest defenders admit that there were in the magazines of Villa-Franca and Lugo provisions for fourteen days' consumption;¹ and even if there had been nothing but the resources of the country to be had, subsequent events proved that they were sufficient for the maintenance of the army; for the French found wherewithal to live on and advance through it, even when following in the rear of the British soldiers. There was no necessity for hurrying on from the danger of being turned in flank, for Ney's corps was several days' march behind Soult's in the defile; and the rugged nature of the country rendered it totally impossible for his troops, worn out by a march of unexampled hardship and rapidity from Madrid, to attempt any threatening movement against the British flank.

Everything, then, counselled deliberation and order in the retreating columns; and the nature of the road through which they passed, consisting of an ascent several leagues in length, up a bare slope, followed by tremendous passes, continuing for several days' journey, shut in on every side by steep or forest-clad mountains, offered the most favourable opportunities for stopping, by a vigorous

* Napoleon subsequently said, at St Helena, that nothing but the talents and firmness of Sir John Moore saved his army from destruction.—O'MEARA, i. 55.

resistance on the part of the rearguard, the active pursuit of the enemy.^{1*} The rapid restoration of discipline and order when battle was offered at Lugo, and the issue of the fight at Corunna, leave no room for doubt as to what would have been the result of such a conflict; and the example of Moreau's retreat through the Black Forest, in 1796, was not required to show how effectually such a fierce aspect on the part of the retiring force saves the blood and secures the safety of the remainder of the army.² The luminous fact that the losses sustained by the rearguard when they arrived at Corunna, notwithstanding all the combats they had undergone, were less than those of any other division of equal number in the army,³ affords a decisive proof how much would have been gained upon the whole by fighting at an earlier period, when the strength and discipline of the army were still comparatively unbroken.

But most of all, the step adopted by Sir David Baird, though a most gallant officer, in unison with Sir John Moore, in counselling the British government, instead of sending out the strong reinforcements, which they projected, and had in preparation, to Galicia, to forward *empty transports*, to bring away the troops, appears to have been unhappy in its consequences. These despatches were sent off in the course of December, and they were not acted upon by the British government without the most severe regret; but at their distance from the scene

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1809.

¹ Lond. i.
260, 261.

² *Ante*, ch.
xxi. §§ 56,
57.

³ Nap. i. 488.

68.
Errors of
Sir David
Baird.

* "The road from Astorga to Corunna," says General Jomini, "traverses a long defile of thirty leagues, bounded by high mountains on either side. A slender rearguard would have sufficed to defend that chaussée. And it was impracticable to manœuvre on either flank of it. That rendered it impossible for Soult to get at the enemy; and Ney, entangled behind him in the defile, could do nothing. This was the more unfortunate, as the English army, having prepared nothing on that line, stood in want of everything, and was in a frightful state of disorder, in consequence of the forced marches which it took for no conceivable reason. They cut the traces of their horses, and abandoned three or four thousand stragglers or dying men, when their line of operations was never menaced. It is impossible to conceive why the English did not defend Corunna. It is not, indeed, a Gibraltar; but against an enemy who had nothing but fieldpieces, it surely could have been maintained for some time, the more especially as they could, at any time, throw in succours by

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of action, they had no alternative but acquiescence.* But for this fatal step, the English army, upon their retreat to the sea-coast, would have found, instead of transports to bring them off, thirteen thousand fresh troops, sufficient to have enabled them to hold out these important fortresses against the enemy, and possibly take a bloody revenge on their pursuers. Ney and Soult would have been retained in Galicia by the presence of thirty thousand men, intrenched in fortified seaports on its coast: the incursion of Soult to Oporto would have been prevented, the battle of Talavera have proved a decisive victory, and the march of Wellington to the Alberche, unmenaced by the descent of Soult, Ney, and Mortier in his rear, might have led him in triumph to Madrid. If the British could not have maintained their ground behind the strong battlements of Ferrol, or the weaker fortifications of Corunna, that might have afforded a good reason for bringing the troops round to Lisbon or Cadiz; but it was none for setting sail to England with the whole expedition, abandoning the contest in the Peninsula as hopeless, when the south was still unsubdued, and leaving ten thousand English soldiers, still in Portugal, to their fate.

In truth, this desponding conduct on the part of such able and gallant officers affords decisive proof that it was a much deeper and more general cause which was in operation, and that England was now paying the

sea. I never could understand their haste on that occasion, which the nation, it is true, has well wiped off in subsequent times."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoleon*, iii. p. 115.

* "The troops which had been embarked on board the transports in England to reinforce Sir John Moore's army," said Mr Canning, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in his place in parliament, "were disembarked in consequence of a distinct requisition from Sir David Baird, that he wanted a certain number of transports; and the transports from which these troops had been disembarked were sent out pursuant to that requisition. It was an afflicting circumstance that it had become necessary to retard these troops, and send out empty, for the purpose of bringing off the British army, those transports which had been fitted for the purpose of reinforcement and assault. But at this distance from the scene of action, ministers could not venture to refuse to send out these transports. The sending them out empty cost government a severe

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LV.

1809.

69.

It was public opinion which was really to blame.

penalty, not of the incapacity of its generals, but of the long-established, and, till the Peninsular war opened, discreditable timidity in military transactions of its government. Accustomed only to land on the Continent for transient expeditions, and to look always, not to their guns and bayonets, but to their ships, as their ultimate refuge, the whole English nation were ignorant of the incalculable effects of *tenacity of purpose* upon public undertakings. They regarded the strength of the state as consisting chiefly in its naval power, when in reality it possessed a military force capable of contending, with fair chances of success, even against the conqueror of continental Europe. Like the bulk of mankind in all ages, they judged of the future by the past, and were unaware of those important modifications of the lessons of experience which the rapid whirl of events in which they were placed was every hour bringing into action. In Sir John Moore's case, this universal, and perhaps unavoidable error, was greatly enhanced by his intimacy with some members of the Opposition party, by whom the military strength of England had been always underrated, the system of Continental operations uniformly decried, and the power and capacity of the French Emperor, great as they were, unworthily magnified.*

Almost all his despatches, in the later stages of the

pang : no resolution ever gave him more pain. Every dictate of the head was tortured, every feeling of the heart wrung by it ; but ministers had no alternative, they were compelled to submit to the hard necessity." The troops so embarked, or in course of embarkation, were 13,000 men. What might not they have achieved, joined to the 17,000 whom Moore led back to Lugo and Corunna !—See *Parl. Deb.* xii. 1089, 1100. Sir John Moore also concurred in the propriety of withholding the reinforcements, and sending out the transports empty.—See SOUTHEY, ii. 519.

* This has been vehemently denied by Col. Napier.—*Penin. War*, vi. *Just. Notes*, 2.—It is sufficient to say, therefore, that Moore's correspondence affords decisive evidence of its truth. On 16th August 1795, he wrote to his brother, "I have written to the Duke of Hamilton, and I make no doubt but, in case of a dissolution, he will bring me into parliament if he can ;" and on the 27th March 1806, when the Whigs were in power, he wrote to his mother, "I have lately turned my thoughts to India, as the greatest and most important command that could fall to a British officer. The Duke of York has communicated my wishes to ministers, and the principal objection which has been made is flat-

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1809.

70.

Moore's desponding views with regard to the contest.

campaign, evince in the clearest colours the influence of this depressing feeling, to which the false exaggerations and real disasters of the Spaniards afforded at the time too much confirmation. Instead, therefore, of casting a shade on the memory of any of the gallant officers intrusted with the direction of the campaign, let us regard its calamitous issue as the forfeit paid by the *nation* for the undue circumspection of former years, which had become so universal as to have penetrated the breast and chilled the hopes even of its most intrepid defenders, and inspired them with that disquietude for their country's safety which they would never have felt for their own. Nations, like individuals, never yet with-

tering—that they do not wish me to go so far from this country. *Lord Lauderdale's appointment* has been an additional inducement for me to wish to go to India." It is needless to say, that Sir John Moore was a man of too much honour to endeavour to get into parliament under the auspices of the leading Whig nobleman in Scotland, or to India under those of a Whig governor-general, if his political principles had been at variance with those of these noblemen.—See *MOORE'S Life*, 307, 392. But it is of little consequence to history whether a gallant officer like Sir John Moore was a Whig or a Tory; for the annals of England can boast of many illustrious commanders who belonged to both parties in politics, beginning with Marlborough on the one side, and Wellington on the other. It is more material to observe that Sir John's correspondence, when in command of the army, both official and private, demonstrates that he was so deeply imbued with those desponding views which the Opposition for fifteen years had been incessantly promulgating, as to the impossibility of the English resisting the power of France on the continent of Europe, that he regarded the contest, not only in Spain, *but in Portugal, as utterly desperate*, and strongly recommended government to abandon the latter country as well as the former, as soon as it could be done with safety to the British troops in it. To Lord William Bentinck he wrote in private, on 14th November 1808, from Salamanca, before the campaign commenced:—"I differ with you in one point—when you say the chief and great resistance to the French will be afforded by the English army; if that be so, Spain is lost. The English army, I hope, will do all which can be expected from its numbers; but the safety of Spain depends upon the union of its inhabitants, their enthusiasm in the cause, and their firm determination to die rather than submit to the French. Nothing short of this will enable them to resist the formidable attack about to be made upon them. If they will adhere, our aid can be of the greatest use to them; but if not, we shall soon be outnumbered were our forces quadrupled. I am, therefore, much more anxious to see exertion and energy in the government, and enthusiasm in their armies, than to have my force augmented. The moment is a critical one—my own situation is peculiarly so—I have never seen it otherwise; but I have pushed into Spain at all hazards. This was the order of my government, and it was the will of the people of England. I shall endeavour to do my best, hoping that all the bad that may happen will not

drew from the ways of error, but by the path of suffering; the sins of the fathers are still visited upon the children. The retreat of Sir John Moore was the transition from the paralysed timidity which refused succours to the Russians after Eylau, to the invincible tenacity which gave durable success to Wellington's campaigns. Happy the nation which can purchase absolution for past errors by so trivial a sacrifice—which can span the gulf from disaster to victory with no greater losses than those sustained in the Corunna retreat, and to whom the the path of the necessary suffering, commencing by the gift of a momentous benefit, is terminated by a ray of imperishable glory!

happen, but that with a share of bad we shall also have a portion of good fortune."—"Every effort," he says, writing to Lord Castlereagh on the 24th of November, "shall be exerted on my part, and that of the officers with me, to unite the army; but your Lordship must be prepared to hear that we have failed: for, situated as we are, *success cannot be commanded by any efforts we can make if the enemy are prepared to oppose us.*" To add to all his other grounds of despondency, he considered Portugal as utterly indefensible by any force England could send thither. "If the French succeed in Spain, *it will be in vain,*" he says, in another letter to Lord Castlereagh, "*to attempt to resist them in Portugal.* The Portuguese are without a military force, and, from the experience of their conduct under Sir Arthur Wellesley, no dependence is to be placed on any aid they can give. The British must, in that event, I conceive, immediately *take steps to evacuate the country.* Lisbon is the only port, and therefore the only place whence the army with its stores can embark. Elvas and Almeida are the only fortresses on the frontiers. The first is, I am told, a respectable work. Almeida is defective, and could not hold out beyond ten days against a regular attack. I have ordered a depot of provisions for a short consumption to be formed there, in case this army should be obliged to fall back; perhaps the same should be done at Elvas. In this case, we might retard the progress of the enemy while the stores were embarking, and arrangements were made for taking off the army. *Beyond this, the defence of Lisbon or of Portugal should not be thought of.*"—CHAMBERS' *Scottish Biography*, iv. 32, 33. Contrast this with the memorandum of Wellington a few months after, on 9th March 1809, in which he expressed a decided opinion, that "*Portugal might be successfully defended even against any force the French could bring against it,* and that the maintenance of that position by the British would be *the greatest support to the common cause in Spain;*" and observe the difference between an able, but not original, mind, which receives its impressions from the current doctrines of the day, and those great intellects which, taking counsel only of their own inspiration, at once break off from general opinion, and for good or for evil determine the fate of nations.—See WELLINGTON'S *Memorandum on the defence of Portugal*, 9th March 1809; GURWOOD, iv. 261, quoted *infra*, Chap. LXII. § 19, note; and his *Despatches to Lord Castlereagh*, 2d April 1810; GURWOOD, vi. 5.

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71.
Reflections
on the cha-
racter of
the British
and French
armies. Su-
periority of
the former
in fighting.

The peculiar character of the British and French troops had already clearly manifested itself in the course of this brief but active campaign. In every regular engagement from first to last, the English had proved successful; they had triumphed equally over the conscripts of Junot and the Imperial Guard of Bessières; the heroes of Austerlitz and Friedland had quailed and sunk beneath their steel. Considering how inexperienced almost all the English regiments were, and that most of the troops engaged at Roliça, Vimeira, and Corunna, there saw a shot fired for the first time in anger, these successes were extremely remarkable, achieved, as they were, sometimes over veteran troops of the enemy, always over those who had the discipline and experience gained by fifteen years of victory to direct their organisation and animate their spirits. They point evidently to what subsequent experience so clearly verified, a greater degree of courage at the decisive moment, arising either from some inherent peculiarity of race, or the animating influence of a free constitution and a long course of historic glory. All the great defeats of France *at land* have come from England. Tenchebray, Cressy, Poitiers, Verneuil, Azincour, Blenheim, Ramilies, Oudenarde, Minden, Quebec, Dettingen, Alexandria, Talavera, Salamanca, Vitoria, Waterloo, were all won by the surpassing valour of British soldiers, often against overwhelming odds of their Continental rivals. Even at Fontenoy, the only great victory since the battle of Hastings which the French have gained over the English, the British were entirely successful: the "terrible English column" penetrated through the French centre, and drove back Louis XV. from his station, after having successively routed every battalion but two in his army; and we have the authority of the French historians for the assertion that, if they had been at all supported by the Austrians and Dutch,* they must have gained a

* "Les Anglais s'avancèrent sans que rien étonnât leur audace. Comme le

glorious victory. So clearly is this superiority of the English in *land*, not less than on sea battles, established by the unbroken events of five centuries, that it is admitted by the ablest and most impassioned French historians, whose rancour against this country is most inveterate, though they profess themselves unable to give any account of it.*

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1809.

But in other respects the superiority of the enemy was manifest, and all the good effects of achieved victory were liable to be lost by the English army, from the want of due discipline and docility in the troops, or from remissness and inexperience on the part of the officers. Place them in a fair field in front of the enemy, and both would honourably discharge their duty: but expose them to the fatigues of a campaign; subject them to the frozen snow or the dripping bivouac; require them to recede before the enemy, and bear the galling reproaches of a pursuer or ally, in expectation of the time when the proper season

72.
And of the
French as
yet in the
other duties
of a cam-
paign.

terrain se resserrait, leurs bataillons furent obligés de se rapprocher; et ainsi se forma naturellement cette redoutable colonne dont le Duc de Cumberland apprécia toute la puissance. En effet elle marchait en lançant la mort de toutes ses faces. Rien ne pouvait entamer cette terrible masse. Les régiments Français venaient inutilement se heurter contre elle et périr. Le premier corps abordé par les Anglais fut le régiment des Gardes Françaises. Avant que le feu commençât, un officier Anglais sort des rangs, ôte son chapeau, et dit — ‘Messieurs les Français, tirez.’ Un officier s’avance aussitôt, et répond — ‘Les Français ne tirent pas les premiers: nous réponderons.’ Les Anglais font feu, et avec tant de précision que la première ligne des Gardes tomba. Cette courtoisie intempestive coûta la vie à dix-huit officiers. Cependant la colonne avançait toujours lentement, mais avec une inébranlable fermeté. Elle avait dépassé, de trois cents toises, le front de l’armée Française. La bataille paraissait perdue, et les personnes qui entouraient le Roi parlaient déjà de la nécessité de sa retraite. Tout était perdu, si le Roi eût quitté le champ de bataille. Quatre pièces de canon, tenues en réserve pour sa sûreté, sont amenées et mises en batterie à quarante pas de la colonne Anglaise. Elles tirent à mitraille à coups précipités: des vides immenses se creusent dans cette masse compacte; toute la cavalerie de la Maison-du-Roi va s’élancer. Le Dauphin tire son épée et s’écrie, ‘Marchons, Français! Où est, donc, l’honneur de la France?’ La cavalerie pénètre de toute part dans les intervalles que le canon a ouverts. Le fer aide le feu dans cette œuvre de destruction, et bientôt cette terrible colonne, qui faisait trembler les plus intrépides, n’est plus qu’un composé des débris qui flottent dans la plaine, et cherchent enfin leur salut dans la fuite.”—DE TOCQUEVILLE, *Histoire de Louis XV.*, i. 526, 527. Such were the exploits of England in the only pitched battle since that of Hastings which they have lost in Europe.

* MICHELET, *Histoire de France*, iv. 137.

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for action should arrive, and it was evident that they had still much to learn in the military art. Above all, intoxication, the inherent national vice, too often loosened the bonds of discipline, and exposed the army to the most serious disasters. These disorders explain the calamities of Sir John Moore's retreat, and go far to excuse his gloomy presentiments as to the ultimate issue of the campaign. In sobriety, durable activity, perseverance under fatigue, care of their horses, versatility of talent, and cheerfulness in disaster, the French were evidently and painfully the superiors of their undaunted rivals; the British army could never, in the same time and with the same order, have made Napoleon's march from Madrid to Astorga. Such were the different excellences of the two armies who were destined, in six successive campaigns, to emulate each other's virtues, and shun each other's defects; and such the aspect of the war when Great Britain, throwing off the unworthy timidity of former years, first descended as a principal into the fight, and Wellington, alternately the Fabius and Marcellus of the contest, prepared, in the fields rendered illustrious by a former Scipio, the triumphs of a second Zama.

CHAPTER LVI.

CAMPAIGN OF ABENSBERG, LANDSHUT, AND ECHMÜHL.

As the history of Europe, during the eventful years which succeeded the French Revolution, contains, in the domestic transactions of every state possessing the shadow even of free institutions, a perpetual recurrence of the strife between the aristocratic and democratic principles; so the military annals of the same period illustrate the effect of these opposite powers on the course of external events, and the issue of warlike operations. In the results of military operations, not less than the consequences of social convulsion, we perceive the influence of the same antagonist principles: the long-continued successes of the one, not less than the persevering firmness of the other, illustrate the action of those great contending powers which in every age have divided between them the government of mankind. France, buoyant with the energy, and radiant with the enthusiasm of a revolution, was for long triumphant; but the fever of passion is transient, the suggestions of interest are permanent in their effects; and in the vehement exertions which the democratic principle there made, externally and internally, to achieve success, the foundation was necessarily laid for disappointment and change within, exhaustion and ultimate disaster without. Austria, less powerfully agitated in the outset, was directed by principles calculated to be more uniform in their operation,

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1808.

1.

Influence of
the aristo-
cratic and
democratic
principles on
the contend-
ing parties
in Europe.

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and more effective in the end. Recurring to the aid of popular enthusiasm only when driven to it by necessity, and guided throughout by aristocratic foresight, she did not so soon wear out the mighty fire which shakes the world. Like a skilful combatant, she gave ground and yielded, till the strength of her antagonist had exhausted itself by exertion ; and thus succeeded at last, not only in appearing with undiminished strength on the theatre of combat, but rousing round her standard the still unexhausted vigour of popular excitation.

2.
Policy of
the Imperial
cabinet since
the peace of
Pressburg.

Since the gallant but unsuccessful attempt made by the Imperial government in 1805, the cabinet of Vienna had adhered with cautious prudence to a system of neutrality. Even the extraordinary temptation afforded by the disasters of the Polish campaign, and the opportunity, then arising, of striking a decisive blow when the forces of the East and the West were engaged in doubtful hostility on the banks of the Alle, had not been able to rouse it to immediate exertion. Austria armed, indeed, and assumed a menacing attitude, but not a sword was drawn. And the impolitic secession of England from the theatre of Continental strife at that period, joined to the rapid termination of the contest by the disaster of Friedland, put an entire stop to any projects of hostility which a decided victory in that quarter by the Muscovite arms, or even the transfer of the war into the interior of Russia, might probably have induced them to entertain. But during this interval the government was not idle. Under the able guidance of the Archduke Charles, the war department assumed an extraordinary degree of activity ; the vast chasms which the campaigns of Ulm and Austerlitz had occasioned in the ranks were filled up by voluntary recruiting, or the prisoners who at length were restored by the French government ; and, with a patriotism and wisdom worthy of the highest admiration, the treasury, at the very time when the state was overburdened with the enormous contribution of four millions sterling,

imposed by the victorious French troops, purchased from their retiring armies the greater part of the immense park of two thousand pieces of cannon, which they were removing from the arsenal of Vienna. During the whole of 1806 and 1807, the efforts of the war department were incessant to restore, without any ostentatious display, the horses of the cavalry and artillery, and replenish the arsenals and magazines, which had been nearly emptied by the consumption or spoliation of the last campaign. But the attention of the Archduke was, in an especial manner, drawn to the remodelling of the infantry, the real basis of all powerful military establishments. The French organisation into *corps d'armée*, under the command of marshals, and divisions under them of generals, each with a certain proportion of cavalry and artillery, so as to render it a little army complete in itself — that admirable system, which Napoleon had adopted from the ancient conquerors of the world—was introduced into the Imperial service.¹ At the same time the younger and more ardent officers, with the Archduke John at their head, eagerly supported still more energetic steps; formed plans of national defence and internal communication; warmly recommended the adoption of measures calculated to rouse the national enthusiasm in the public defence; and already contemplated those heroic sacrifices in the event of another invasion, which afterwards, under Wellington in Portugal, and Alexander in Russia, led to such memorable results.²

It was the presence of the Grand Army of France, two hundred thousand strong, in the north and west of Germany, which long overawed the Imperial government, and prevented the adoption of any steps which could give umbrage to Napoleon. But with the transfer of a large part of that immense force to the Peninsula, after the breaking out of the war there, this oppressive load was materially diminished. The able statesman who directed the Imperial councils, immediately perceived that

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1808.

¹ *Ante*, ch. xxxix. § 55.

² Pelet, *Guerre de 1809*, i. 36, 37. Der Erzherzog Johan, *Feldzug in jahre 1809*, 8.

3.
Important decree for the formation of the Landwehr. June 1808.

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1808.

June 9.

a powerful diversion was now likely to be made in the quarter where the French Emperor least expected it, and where he was most desirous of obtaining solid support. They readily anticipated that England would not be slow in availing herself of this unexpected revolution of fortune in her favour, and in descending in strength upon that theatre of warfare where the sea would prove the best possible base for military operations, and the scanty internal resources of the country would render it impossible to keep the armies of France together for any length of time in sufficient strength for their expulsion. In order to be in a situation to improve any chances which might thus arise in their favour, the cabinet of Vienna no sooner heard of the breaking out of the Spanish contest, than they issued a decree by which a militia, raised by conscription, under the name of the LANDWEHR, was instituted. The general enthusiasm in favour of the monarchy, about, it was hoped, to resume its place among the European powers, soon raised this admirable force from two hundred thousand, the number fixed by the law for its German possessions, to three hundred thousand men. In addition to this, the Hungarian Diet voted twelve thousand recruits for the regular army for the year 1807, and eighty thousand for 1808; besides an insurrection, or levy *en masse*, of eighty thousand men, of whom thirty thousand were excellent horsemen. These immense military preparations, in addition to a regular standing army now raised to three hundred and fifty thousand men, were sufficient to demonstrate the existence of some great national project;¹ * and they were rendered still more formidable by the activity which prevailed in completing

¹ Pelet, 37, 38. Hard. x. 296, 297. Erz. Johan. Feldzug 1809, 10, 12. Jom. ii. 138, 141.

* The forces of Austria at this period were :—

Regular troops,	.	.	.	.	.	316,705
Reserves,	.	.	.	.	.	59,800
Landwehr,	.	.	.	.	.	185,714
Hungarian insurrection,	.	.	.	.	.	100,000

 662,219

the remounting of the cavalry and artillery, and arming the fortresses, both on the frontier and in the interior ; as well as the enthusiastic feelings which this universal sound of military preparation had awakened in all classes of the monarchy.

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Napoleon was no sooner informed of these serious military changes, than he addressed the most pressing remonstrances to the Imperial cabinet ; and, in the midst of the increasing intricacy of the Peninsular affairs, and all the whirl of a rapid journey from Bayonne, by Bordeaux, to Paris, repeatedly demanded a categorical explanation of armaments so well calculated to disturb the peace of Europe. At the same time he addressed a circular to the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, in which he called on them "to make ready their contingents, and prevent a war without a pretext, as without an object, by showing to Austria that they were prepared for it." No sooner had he arrived in his capital than he addressed a public remonstrance on the same subject to Metternich the Austrian ambassador, in presence of all the diplomatists of Europe.* The Imperial government

4.
Napoleon's
remon-
strances
against
these mea-
sures.
July 24.

Aug. 15.

* "Je le répète : vous êtes entraînés, et malgré vous. La fermentation de votre peuple imprudemment excité, et les intrigues des partisans des Anglais, et des quelques membres de l'ordre équestre, qui ont porté chez vous l'amertume de leurs regrets, vous mèneront à la guerre. L'Empereur de la Russie peut-être l'empêchera ; mais si ce n'est qu'à son intervention que l'Europe doit la continuation de la paix, ni l'Europe, ni moi, ne vous aurons obligation. En attendant qu'arrivera-t-il ? Vous avez levé 400,000 hommes ; je vais en lever 200,000. La Confédération, qui avait renvoyé ses troupes, va les réunir, et faire des levées. L'Allemagne, qui commençait à respirer après tant de guerres ruineuses, va voir de nouveau rouvrir toutes ses blessures. A suivre votre exemple, il faudra armer jusqu'aux femmes. Dans un tel état des choses, lorsque tous les ressorts seront tendus, la guerre deviendra désirable pour amener un dénouement. C'est ainsi que dans le monde physique, l'état de souffrance où est la nature à l'approche d'un orage, fait désirer que l'orage crève, pour détendre les fibres crispées, et rendre au ciel et à la terre une douce sérénité. Un mal vif, mais court, vaut mieux qu'une souffrance prolongée. Cependant, toutes les espérances de la paix maritime s'évanouissent ; les mesures fortes, prises pour l'obtenir, demeurent sans effet. Les Anglais sourient à la Prusse du désordre ranimé de nouveau sur le Continent, et se reposent sur elle de la défense de leurs intérêts. Voilà les maux que vous avez produits, et, je le crois, sans en avoir l'intention : mais si vos dispositions sont aussi pacifiques que vous le dites, il faut vous prononcer." —*Paroles de NAPOLEON à METTERNICH, 15th August 1808 ; BIGNON, vii. 340, 341.*

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1808.

¹ Pelet, i. 39,
40. Hard.
x. 295, 296.

5.
Deceitful
pacific pro-
fessions of
Austria at
Erfurth.

made loud professions of pacific intentions, but did not for an hour discontinue their military preparations. Napoleon was not deceived: the coincidence of these formidable armaments with the insurrection in Spain, and the disasters of Vimeira and Baylen, was too evident to escape the most ordinary sagacity: but he dissembled his resentment, and contented himself with ordering the princes of the Confederation to keep their contingents together, and strengthening to the utmost the armies in Germany, so as to replace the veterans who were withdrawn in such numbers for the war in the Peninsula.¹

It was in a great measure to overawe Austria that Napoleon pressed the Emperor Alexander to meet him at Erfurth; and he flattered himself, that however tempting the opportunity afforded by the Spanish insurrection might be, the cabinet of Vienna would hesitate before they engaged in hostilities with the two most powerful military states of the Continent. The preparations of Austria being not yet complete, it was deemed advisable to gain time; and in order to accomplish this object, M. de Vincent was despatched to that city with a letter to the Emperors, so full of protestations of amity that Napoleon authorised the princes of the Confederation to dismiss their contingents, with the advice merely to reassemble them as soon as Austria resumed her hostile attitude.* To the Emperor Francis he returned an answer, earnestly counselling moderation and pacific views; † and having thus, as he hoped, dispelled the cloud

* "He flattered himself that the Emperor Napoleon had never ceased to be convinced, that if false insinuations, in regard to the organic changes which he had deemed it necessary to introduce into his monarchy, had for a moment thrown doubts on the continuance of his amicable relations, the explanations which Count Metternich had made on that subject had entirely dissipated them. The Baron Vincent was charged to confirm them, and to afford every explanation that could be desired."—FRANCIS to NAPOLEON, 21st Sept. 1808; SCHOELL, ix. 218.

† "He could assure his Imperial Majesty that he was seriously afraid he should see hostilities renewed; the war faction had pushed Austria to the most violent measures, and threatened misfortunes even greater than the preceding ones. If, however, the measures of the Emperor Francis were such as to

which threatened to burst in the east of Germany, or at least delayed its bursting, he by a formal decree dissolved the Grand Army, and directed a considerable part of the troops composing it, particularly the corps of Soult and Ney, with the Imperial Guards, to Spain, where they achieved the successes which have already been detailed.¹

Notwithstanding the disasters, however, which befel the Spaniards, the cabinet of Vienna was not discouraged. During the winter, measures evidently indicating a hostile spirit, were adopted; the harbour of Trieste was opened to the English and Spanish flag; large purchases of arms were there made by the agents of the Spanish insurgents; articles hostile to Napoleon began to appear in the public journals, which, being all under the control of the police, indicated more or less the disposition of government; and the Austrian ambassador declined to accede to a proposal made at Paris by Count Romanzoff, for the conclusion of a treaty, involving a triple guarantee between the courts of St Petersburg, Vienna, and the Tuileries. Secret amicable relations had been established with Great Britain—the common refuge of all those on the Continent, however hostilely disposed in former times, who found the tyranny of France growing insupportable. But though the cabinet of St James's tendered the offer of their assistance in subsidies, they strongly counselled the Imperial government not to take the irrevocable step, unless the resources of the monarchy were clearly equal to the struggle which awaited them. The animating display so recently made,

CHAP.
LVI.

1808.

Oct. 14.

¹ Thib. v.

200, 201.

Pelet, i.

42, 47.

6.

Intelligence of the preparations of Austria induces Napoleon to halt in Spain and return to Paris.

indicate confidence, they would inspire it. Truth and simplicity have now become the best politicians; he had communicated to him his apprehensions, in order that they might be instantly dissipated: when he had it in his power to have dismembered the Austrian dominions, he had not done so: he was ever ready, on the contrary, to guarantee their integrity. The last levy *en masse* would have occasioned a war, if he had believed it was raised in concert with Russia. He had just disbanded the camp of the Confederation of the Rhine: one hundred thousand of his troops were about to renew their threatening attitude against England. Let your Imperial Majesty, therefore, abstain from all hostile armaments which can give umbrage to the French cabinet, or operate as a diversion in favour of Great Britain."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 73, 74.

CHAP.
LVI.

1808.

Dec. 16.

Jan. 15,
1809.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
lv. § 47.
Thib. vii.
200, 202.
Hard. x.
297, 298.
Pelet, i.
45, 48.

however, of the vigour of the English administration, notwithstanding their prudent advice, was such as eminently to inspire confidence; the spectacle of thirty thousand British soldiers taking the field, in the Peninsular campaigns, was as unusual as it was encouraging, and promised a diversion of a very different kind from those which had terminated in such disaster on the plains of Flanders and the bay of Quiberon. At length there appeared, in the middle of December, a declaration of the King of England, which openly alluded to the hostile preparations of Austria, and assigned the prejudicial effect of Great Britain withdrawing at such a moment from the contest, as a powerful reason for declining the mediation of France and Russia, offered at Erfurth;* and the same courier, who, on the 1st January 1809, brought this important state paper to Napoleon, conveyed also decisive intelligence in regard to the hostile preparations and general movement in the Austrian states. Napoleon immediately halted, as already mentioned, at Astorga; returned with extraordinary expedition to Valladolid, where he shut himself up for two days with Maret, his minister for foreign affairs; despatched eighty-four messengers in different directions, with orders to concentrate his forces in Germany, and call out the full contingents of the Rhenish confederacy; and returned himself without delay to Paris.¹

7.
Division of
opinion in
the Austrian
cabinet on
the war.

The Austrian cabinet, meanwhile, notwithstanding their hostile preparations, were as yet undecided as to the course which they should finally adopt. The extreme peril which the monarchy had already undergone in the wars with Napoleon, as well as the uncertain nature of

* "If, among the nations who maintain against France a precarious and doubtful independence, there are any who, at this moment, hesitate between the ruin which will result from a prolonged inaction and the contingent dangers which may arise from a courageous effort to escape from it, the deceitful prospect of a peace between Great Britain and France could not fail to be singularly disastrous. The vain hope of a return of tranquillity might suspend their preparations, or the fear of being abandoned to their own resources shake their resolution."—16th Dec. 1808, *King's Speech, Parl. Deb.*

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

the diversion which they could expect from so tumultuary a force as the Spanish insurrection, naturally excited the most anxious solicitude, and induced many of the warmest and wisest patriots to pause before they engaged in a contest which, if unsuccessful, might prove the last which the country might ever have to sustain. Opinions were much divided, not only in the cabinet but the nation, on the subject. At the head of the party inclined to preserve peace, was the Archduke Charles, whose great military exploits and able administration as director of the war department necessarily gave his opinion the greatest weight, and who had felt too frequently the weight of the French arms not to appreciate fully the danger of again provoking their hostility. On the other hand, the war party found an able and energetic advocate in Count STADION,* the prime minister, who was cordially seconded by the majority of the nobility, and ardently supported by the great body of the people. It was known also that the Emperor himself inclined to the same opinion. The question was vehemently argued, not only in the cabinet, but in all the private circles of the metropolis.

On the one hand it was argued that the military preparations of the monarchy were still incomplete, and its finances in the most deplorable state of confusion; that Prussia, whatever her inclination might be, was incap-

8.
Arguments
used on both
sides.

* Philippe, Count de Stadion, was born at Mentz on the 18th June 1763, of an old and distinguished family of Upper Rhætia, whose members had for generations been in the public service of the house of Austria. He received the rudiments of his education at Göttingen, and entered the Imperial diplomatic service at a very early age, under the auspices of the veteran Kaunitz, who sent him, when only twenty-four, to Sweden, with the power of Imperial plenipotentiary. In 1792 he was despatched by Baron Thugut, then prime minister of the cabinet of Vienna, to London with the same appointment; but as the more important duties of the English embassy were at the same period intrusted to M. Merrey d'Argenteau, Stadion took offence, and, resigning his appointment, retired to his estates in Swabia. He was there made grand treasurer of the bishopric of Würzburg; and he represented the Elector of Mentz at the congress of Rastadt in 1802, when the principle of confiscating the ecclesiastical property for the benefit of the secular princes was so largely acted on. He there defended the interests of his master the Bishop of Würzburg, who was threatened with spoliation, with so much ability and judgment, that the cabinet of Vienna, which ever has its eye on rising ability for the diplomatic service,

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LVI.

1809.

able of rendering any efficient assistance, and Russia too closely united with the French Emperor for any hope to remain of her co-operation; that the Spanish insurgents could not be expected long to hold out against the immense forces which Napoleon had now directed against them, and accordingly had been defeated in every encounter since he in person directed the movements of his troops; and the English auxiliaries, deprived of the solid base of Peninsular co-operation, would necessarily be driven, as on former occasions, to their ships. What madness, then, for the sake of a transient and uncertain success, to incur a certain and unavoidable danger, and expose the Austrian monarchy alone and unaided, as it would soon be, to the blows of a conqueror too strongly irritated to allow the hope that, after disaster, moderate terms would again be allowed to the vanquished! On the other hand it was strongly contended, that so favourable an opportunity of reinstating the empire in the rank it formerly held in Europe could never again be looked for, and was in fact more advantageous than could possibly have been expected; that the great majority of the French veteran troops had been directed to the Peninsula, and were now either plunged into the mountains of Galicia, or inextricably involved in the heart of Spain; that sixty thousand French conscripts alone remained in Germany, and the

again took him into its employment, and he was sent as ambassador to Berlin in 1801. He discharged the duties of that situation with so much ability that, after holding it for two years, he was elevated to the still more important mission of ambassador to St Petersburg. In that capacity he had the principal share in conducting at that capital the formation of the grand alliance, which terminated so fatally for Austria by the battle of Austerlitz and treaty of Pressburg. After that, he was appointed to the important situation of minister of foreign affairs at Vienna—an office of difficulty at all times, but peculiarly so at that juncture, from the depressed condition of Austria among the European powers. He conducted himself in that responsible and thorny situation with equal judgment and ability; and when Austria again took up arms in 1809, he acquired the principal lead in the important measures which attended the contest. He was a minister of a firm and intrepid character; devoted to his country, ardent in his disposition, and on that account a decided opponent through life of the grasping and domineering ambition of France.—See *Biographie Universelle*, xliii. 389—STADION.

Rhenish confederates could not be relied on to adhere to the stranger when the standards of the Fatherland were openly unfurled ; that the confusion of the finances was of no importance, when the subsidies of England might with certainty be expected to furnish the necessary supplies, and the incompleteness of the military preparations of little moment, when the now awakened fervour of the nation was attracting all ranks in crowds to the national standard ; that it was in vain to refer to the long-dreaded prowess of the French armies, when the disaster of Baylen and the defeat of Vimeira had dispelled the charm of their invincibility ; that there could be no question that the hour of Europe's deliverance was approaching ; the only question was, whether Austria was to remain passive during the strife, and bear no part either in the glories by which it was to be achieved, or the spoils with which it would be attended. These considerations, speaking as they did to the generous and enthusiastic feelings of our nature, and supported by the great influence of the Emperor, the ministry, and the principal nobility, at length prevailed over the cautious reserve and prudent foresight of the Archduke Charles, and war was resolved on. In truth, the public fervour had risen to such a height, that it could no longer be delayed ; and, like many other of the most important steps in the history of all nations, its consequences, good or bad, were unavoidable.¹

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

¹ Erz. Johan.
Feld. 1809,
24, 27.
Pelet, i.
59, 61.

The French forces in Germany, when the contest was thus renewed, were far from being considerable ; and it was chiefly an exaggerated impression of the extent to which they had been reduced, which led the cabinet of Vienna, at that period, to throw off the mask. The total amount, in September 1808, on paper, was one hundred and sixty thousand men, of whom forty thousand were cavalry ; but the number actually present with the eagles did not exceed a hundred and forty thousand, of whom only a hundred and ten thousand were native French, the remainder being Poles, Saxons, and Dutch. After

9.
Amount and
distribution
of the French
forces in
Germany,
in spring
1809.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

¹ Stutterheim, Feld.
1809, 19, 20.
Pelet, 43,
44.

the departure of three divisions of Soult's corps for the Peninsula in the end of October, the remainder, eighty thousand strong, assumed the name of the army of the Rhine, and were quartered at Magdeburg, Baireuth, Hanover, and Stettin, and in the fortresses on the Oder. But to this force of imperial France there was to be added nearly one hundred thousand men from the Rhenish confederacy; so that, after making every allowance for detachments and garrisons, a hundred and fifty thousand men might be relied on for active operations on the Inn, or in the valley of the Danube.¹

10.
Efforts of
Austria to
obtain the
accession of
Russia to
the confederacy.

The Austrian cabinet made the utmost efforts to obtain the accession of Russia to the new confederacy; and for this purpose despatched an officer of diplomatic talent, engaging address, and noble figure, reserved for exalted destinies in future times, PRINCE SCHWARTZENBERG, to St Petersburg. Stadion had been previously made aware, by secret communications from Baron Stein, the Duke de Serra Capriola, and others, that, notwithstanding Alexander's chivalrous admiration of Napoleon, he still retained at bottom the same opinions as to the necessity of ultimately joining in the confederacy for the deliverance of Europe; and he was not without hopes that the present opportunity, when so large a portion of the French armies were engaged in the Peninsula, would appear to the cabinet of St Petersburg a fair one for taking the lead in the great undertaking. In truth, the Emperor Alexander was much perplexed how to act; the obvious interests of his empire impelling him one way, and his secret engagements with Napoleon another. After a short struggle, however, the latter prevailed. Alexander had given his word to the French Emperor; and though capable of the utmost dissimulation so far as the mere obligations of cabinets were concerned, the Czar was scrupulously faithful to any personal engagements which he had undertaken. He was occupied, moreover, with those great schemes of ambition

both on his northern and southern frontier, which had formed the bait by which Napoleon had lured him into the French alliance; and little inclined to forego present and certain conquests in Finland and Moldavia, for the problematical advantages of a contest in the heart of Germany. All attempts to engage Russia in the confederacy, therefore, proved abortive; and the utmost which the Austrian envoy could obtain from the imperial cabinet, was a secret assurance that Russia, if compelled to take a part in the strife, would not at least bring forward any formidable force against the Austrian legions.¹

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

¹ Hard. x.
299, 302.
Pelet, i. 67,
68. Bout. i.
24, 58. Bign.
viii. 182.

The cabinet of Berlin had no objects of present ambition to obtain by remaining quiescent during the approaching conflict; and the wrongs of Tilsit were too recent and serious not to have left the strongest desire for liberation and vengeance in every Prussian heart. No sooner, therefore, had it become manifest that Austria was arming, than public feeling became strongly excited in all the Prussian states, and the government was violently urged by a powerful party, both in and out of the cabinet, to seize the present favourable opportunity of regaining its lost provinces, and resuming its place among the powers of Europe. Scharnhorst, the minister at war, warmly supported the bolder policy; and offered to place at the disposal of the King, by his admirable system of temporary service,² no less than one hundred and twenty thousand men, instead of the forty-two thousand whom they were alone permitted to have under arms. But the government was restrained from giving vent to its wishes, not merely by prudential considerations, but by a sense of gratitude. The visit of the King and the Queen to St Petersburg in the preceding spring, had renewed the bonds of amity by which they were united to the Emperor Alexander: they had obtained a considerable remission of tribute, and relaxation of the hardships of the treaty of Tilsit, from his intercession;³ and

11.
Prussia resolves to remain neutral.

² *Ante*, ch.
li. § 14.

Jan. 1809.

³ *Ante*, ch.
li. § 14.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

¹ Hard. x.
299. Pelet,
i. 65, 67.

they felt that, though they never could be indifferent spectators of the Austrian efforts, they were not in safe position to take a part in them, until the intentions of Russia were declared. They resolved, therefore, to remain neutral; and thus had Napoleon again the extraordinary good fortune, through his own address or the jealousies or timidity of the other potentates, of engaging a *fourth* time in mortal conflict with one of the great European powers while the other two were mere spectators of the strife.¹

12.
General
efferves-
cence in
Germany
in aid of
the Austrian
cause.

But, though refused all co-operation from the European cabinets, the court of Vienna was not without hopes of obtaining powerful succours from the Germanic people. The Tugendbund or Burschenschaft, which had spread its ramifications as far as indignation at French oppression was felt in the north and east of Germany, had already formed a secret league against the oppressor, independent of the agreements of cabinets; and thousands of brave men in Westphalia, Cassel, Saxony, and the Prussian states, animated by the example of the Spanish patriots, were prepared to start up in arms for the defence of the Fatherland, as soon as the Imperial standards crossed the Inn. The peasants of the Tyrol, whose ardent and hereditary attachment to the house of Hapsburg had been rendered still more enthusiastic by the bitter experience they had had of their treatment as aliens and enemies by the Bavarian government, longed passionately to rejoin the much-loved Austrian dominion; and the first battalion of the Imperial troops which crossed the Salzbourg frontier would, it was well known, at once rouse twenty thousand brave mountaineers into desperate and formidable hostility. The cabinet of Vienna, despite its aristocratic prepossessions, was prepared to take full advantage of these favourable dispositions; and, impelled by necessity, not only maintained in secret an active correspondence with the numerous malcontents in the adjoining provinces, who panted for the moment of

German deliverance, but was prepared, the moment hostilities were commenced, to call upon them by animated proclamations to repair to its standards, and determine, by a vigorous popular demonstration, the uncertainty or vacillations of their respective governments. Thus had the energy of general enthusiasm in the course of the contest already come to change sides. While France, resting on the coalitions of cabinets and the force of disciplined armies, was sternly repressing, in every direction, the fervour of national exertion, Spain and Austria openly invoked the aid of popular enthusiasm, and loudly proclaimed the right of mankind, when oppression had reached a certain point, to redress their own wrongs, and take the lead in the achievement of their own deliverance.^{1*}

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

¹ Pelet, i.
71, 79. Erz.
Johan. Feld.
52, 54.

Meanwhile the Austrian ambassador at Paris had the difficult task to discharge, of maintaining apparently amicable relations with the French government at the time when his cabinet were openly preparing the means of decided hostility. But the BARON METTERNICH, who then filled that important situation at the court of Napoleon, was a man whose abilities were equal to the task. A statesman, in the widest acceptation of the word, gifted with a sagacious intellect, a clear perception, a sound judgment; profoundly versed in the secrets of diplomacy, and the characters of the leading political men with whom he was brought in contact in the different European cabinets; persevering in his policy, far-

13.
Character of
Metternich,
the Austrian
ambassador
at Paris.

* Napoleon loudly accused the cabinet of Vienna of insurrectionary iniquity, in thus fomenting popular efforts against the armies of imperial France. "Austria," said the *Moniteur*, "has adopted the revolutionary system: she has no right now to complain of the conduct of the Convention, in proclaiming war to the palace and peace to the cottage. A plan has been organised at Vienna for a general insurrection over all Europe, the execution of which is confided to the ardent zeal of the princes of the house of Austria, propagated by the proclamations of its generals, and diffused by its detachments at the distance of two hundred leagues from its armies. The leading characteristic of that system is, the *terror* universally spread by the Austrian generals, to excite by main force that revolution."—*Moniteur*, No. 239, 1809; and PELET, i. 79.

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LVI.

1809.

seeing in his views, unrivalled in his discrimination, and at the same time skilful in concealing these varied qualities; a perfect master of dissimulation in public affairs, and yet honourable and candid in private life; capable of acquiring information from others, at the very moment when he was eluding all similar investigations by them; unbounded in application, richly endowed with knowledge, he also enjoyed the rare faculty of veiling these great acquirements under the cover of polished manners, and causing his superiority to be forgotten in the charms of a varied and intellectual conversation. These admirable abilities were fully appreciated at Berlin, where he had formerly been ambassador; but they excited jealousy and distrust among the diplomatists of Paris, who, seeing in the new representative of the Cæsars, qualities which they were not accustomed to in his predecessors, and unable either to overcome his caution, or divine his intentions, launched forth into invectives against his character, and put a forced or malevolent construction upon his most inconsiderable actions.¹

¹ Hard. x.
302, 303.
D'Abr. xvi.
174, 175.

14.
Angry inter-
change of
notes be-
tween the
French and
Austrian
courts,
Feb. 17.

Notwithstanding all his caution and diplomatic address, however, the Austrian ambassador could not blind the French Emperor to the preparations which were going forward. In a public audience of the envoys of the principal European powers at Paris, he openly charged the cabinet of Vienna with hostile designs; and Metternich, who could not deny them, had no alternative but to protest that they were defensive only, and rendered necessary by the hostile attitude of the princes of the Rhenish confederacy, to whom Napoleon had recently transmitted orders to call out their contingents.* In

* "Well," said Napoleon, "M. Metternich, here are fine news from Vienna! What does all this mean? Have they been stung by scorpions? Who threatens you? What would you be at? As long as I had my army in Germany, you conceived no disquietude for your existence; but the moment it was transferred to Spain, you consider yourselves endangered! What can be the end of these things? What, but that I must arm as you arm, for at length I am

truth, however, though loud complaints of hostile preparations were made on both sides, neither party was desirous to precipitate the commencement of active operations. Austria had need of every hour she could gain to complete her armaments, and draw together her troops upon the frontier from the various quarters of her extensive dominions; and Napoleon had as much occasion for delay, to concentrate his forces from the north and centre of Germany in the valley of the Danube; and he was desirous not to unsheath the sword till advices from St Petersburg made him certain of the concurrence of Alexander in his designs. At length the long-wished for despatches arrived, and relieved him of all anxiety by announcing the mission of Prince Schwartzemberg to St Petersburg, the refusal of the cabinet of Russia to accede to his proposals, and its determination to support Napoleon in the war with Austria which was approaching. Orders were immediately despatched for the French ambassador to leave Vienna, who accordingly took his departure on the last day of February, leaving only a chargé-d'affaires to communicate intelligence till relations were finally broken off; and though Metternich still remained at Paris, his departure was hourly expected; and such was the estrangement of the Emperor, that he never addressed to him a word, even in public and formal diplomatic intercourse. Meanwhile the funds at Paris

Feb. 19.

seriously menaced. I am rightly punished for my former caution. Have you, sir, communicated your pretended apprehensions to your court? If you have done so, you have disturbed the peace of mine, and will probably plunge Europe into numberless calamities. I have always been the dupe of your court in diplomacy; we must now speak out; it is making too much noise for the preservation of peace, too little for the prosecution of war. Do they suppose me dead? We shall see how their projects will succeed; and they will reproach me with being the cause of hostilities, when it is their own folly which forces me to engage in them. But let them not imagine they will have war to carry on with me alone; I expect a courier from Russia; if matters turn out there as I expect, I shall give them fighting enough." How easily may Napoleon's ideas and words be always distinguished from those of all other men! At least he always lets us understand his meaning; no inconsiderable advantage, in the midst of the general studied obscurity and evasions of diplomatic language.— See THIBAUDEAU, vii. 204, 205.

CHAP.
LVl.

1809.

Feb. 23.
1 Thib. vii.
205, 206.
Hard. x.
303, 304.
Pelet, i.
117, 119.
Stat. 14, 20.
Bign. viii.
145.

fell rapidly on the intelligence of the disasters in Spain, and the warlike preparations of Austria. The five per cents, which had reached ninety after the treaty of Tilsit, fell to eighty : but Napoleon, with despotic authority, determined they should descend no further. Without consulting his council, he issued an order that all stock offered below eighty should be purchased by the government with money furnished by the sinking-fund and the bank. The stock speedily fell lower, but the government purchases arrested the decline, and for six months the struggle continued, during which 30,000,000 francs (£1,200,000) were expended by the treasury. In the end, however, the battle of Wagram put an end to the contest, by raising the stock above eighty.¹

15.
Deep um-
brage taken
by Austria
at the con-
ference of
Erfurth.

In the course of his discussions with Champagny, the French minister for foreign affairs at this period, Metternich, with all his caution, could not disguise the deep umbrage taken by Austria at not having been invited to take part in the conferences of Erfurth; and he admitted, that, if this had been done, the cabinet of Vienna would in all probability have recognised Joseph as King of Spain, and the rupture would have been entirely prevented. This was the most serious grievance which he had to allege against the coalesced Emperors. It was more than an affair of jealousy; material interests were at stake. Austria had good reason to anticipate evil to herself from the ominous conjunction of two such powers in her neighbourhood; while at the same time, the cordiality of Alexander would unquestionably have cooled if Francis or Metternich had been admitted to these deliberations. Napoleon's favour was too precious to be divided between two potentates without exciting jealousy: like a beauty surrounded by lovers, he could not show a preference to one without producing estrangement of the other. He chose for his intimate ally the power of whose strength he had had the most convincing experience, and from whose hostility he had, from its distance, least to apprehend.²

² Thib. vii.
207. Bign.
viii. 181.

Meanwhile, Napoleon was rapidly completing his arrangements. Orders were despatched to Davoust early in March to concentrate his immense corps at Bamberg, and establish the headquarters of the whole army at Würtzburg; Massena, at the same time, received directions to repair to Strassburg, and press on with his corps to Ulm, and there unite with the army of the Rhine; Oudinot was moved upon Augsburg; Bernadotte despatched to Dresden to take the command of the Saxons; Bessières, with the Imperial Guard, transported by post in all imaginable haste from Burgos across the Pyrenees and to the Rhine; instructions were transmitted to the French ambassador at Warsaw to hasten the formation of three Polish divisions, to co-operate with the Russians in protecting the Grand-duchy of Warsaw and menacing Galicia; while the princes of the Rhenish confederacy were enjoined to collect their respective contingents at their different rallying points, and direct them towards the general rendezvous of this immense force on the Danube, at Ingolstadt or Donauwörth. Thus, from all quarters of Europe, from the mountains of Asturias to the plains of Poland, armed men were converging in all directions to the valley of the Danube, where a hundred and fifty thousand soldiers would ere long be collected; while the provident care of the Emperor was not less actively exerted in collecting magazines upon the projected line of operations for the stupendous multitude, and providing, in the arming and replenishing of the fortresses, both a base for offensive operations, and a refuge in the event of disaster.¹

On the side of the Austrians, preparations not less threatening were going rapidly forward. The regular army had been augmented to three hundred thousand infantry and above thirty thousand cavalry; besides two hundred thousand of the landwehr and Hungarian insurrection. The disposable force was divided into nine corps, besides two of reserve. Six of these, containing nomi-

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

16.

Measures for
the concentra-
tion of
the French
army.
March 4.¹ Thib. vii.
206. Pelet,
i. 119, 126.
Stat. 26, 29.17.
Prepara-
tions and
forces of
Austria.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

nally one hundred and fifty thousand men, of whom one hundred and twenty thousand might be relied on as able to assemble round the standards, were mustered on the frontiers of Bavaria, besides a reserve in Bohemia, under the immediate command of the Archduke Charles. The Archduke John was intrusted with the direction of two others, forty-seven thousand strong, in Italy, supported by the landwehr of Carinthia, Carniola, and Istria, at least twenty-five thousand more, who, though hardly equal to a shock in the field, were of great value in garrisoning fortresses and conducting secondary operations; the Marquis Chastellar was prepared to enter the eastern frontier of the Tyrol from the Pusterthal, with twelve thousand regular troops, where he expected to be immediately joined by twenty thousand hardy and warlike peasants; while the Archduke Ferdinand, with thirty thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry, was to invade the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, and avert the calamities of war from the Galician plains. The total number of troops, after deducting the non-effective and sick, might amount to two hundred and twenty thousand infantry and twenty-eight thousand cavalry, with eight hundred pieces of cannon: a prodigious force, when their discipline and efficiency were taken into consideration, and the support which they were to receive, not only from the immense reserves of landwehr in all the provinces, but from the general spirit and unanimity of the monarchy. The commencement of hostilities at once in Bavaria, Italy, the Tyrol, and Poland, might seem an imprudent dispersion of strength, especially when the tremendous blows to be anticipated from Napoleon in the valley of the Danube are duly weighed; but these, in appearance offensive, were in reality strictly defensive operations. It was well known that the moment war was declared, the French Emperor, according to his usual policy, would direct all his forces against the centre of the enemy's power;¹ invasion from Italy, Bavaria, and Poland was immediately to

¹ Stat. 34,
40. Pelet,
i. 166, 173.
Jom. iii.
140. Bign.
viii. 173.

be anticipated; and in maintaining the struggle in the hostile provinces adjoining the frontier, the war was in reality averted from their own vitals.*

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The utmost efforts were at the same time made to rouse the patriotic ardour of all classes, and government in that important duty were magnanimously seconded by the nobles and people throughout the empire. Never, indeed, since the foundation of the monarchy, had unanimity so universal prevailed through all the varied provinces of the Imperial dominions, and never had so enthusiastic a spirit animated all ranks of the people. The nobles, the clergy, the peasants, the burghers, all felt the sacred flame, and vied with each other in devotion to the common cause. The enthusiasm of the women in particular, as in all cases of vehement public excitement, knew no bounds. At their head was the young Empress, married only the year before, who entered into the contest as warmly as the Queen of Prussia had done at Berlin before the battle of Jena. Her mother, the Archduchess Beatrice, had openly declared against France, and many ladies of the highest rank, especially the Princess Bagrathion, the Princess Legnowski, the Countess de Kaunitz, added the influence of their charms to the general enthusiasm. The requisitions of government were instantly agreed to; the supplies of men and money cheerfully voted; the levies for the regular army anticipated by voluntary enrolment; the landwehr rapidly filled up with brave and hardy peasants. At Vienna, in particular, the patriotic ardour was unbounded; and when the Archduke Charles, on the 6th April, marched into the city at the head of his regiment, one swell of rapture seemed to animate the whole population.¹ That accomplished prince aided the general ardour by an address to his soldiers on the day of his entry,† which deserves to be recorded for the generous

18.
Spirit which
animated all
classes of
the Austrian
empire.

¹ Bign. viii.
173. Stut.
34, 41. Erz.
Johan. Feld.
29, 34. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
203, 204.

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LVI.

† "When all endeavours to preserve independence from the insatiable ambition of a foreign conqueror prove fruitless, when nations are falling around us, and when lawful sovereigns are torn from the hearts of their subjects; when, in

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19.
Last diplo-
matic com-
munications
at Paris.
March 10.

sentiments which it expresses, as well as the light which it throws on the general reasons for the war.

While these immense military preparations were going on upon both sides, the semblance of diplomatic relations was still kept up at Paris. Metternich, who remained there to the last, rather as a legitimate spy than in any other character, presented a note to the cabinet of the Tuileries on the 10th March. He there represented it as an undoubted fact, that since the treaty which followed the evacuation of Braunau, there was no longer any subject of difference between the two powers; and that, although the Emperor of Austria might well conceive disquietude at the numerous movements which had taken place since January, he had no desire except to see Europe in peace. The French cabinet replied, that unquestionably no subject of difference remained between the two powers; and that, this being the case, the Emperor could not conceive, either what the Austrians would be at, or what occasioned their pretended disquietudes. Here terminated this diplomatic farce: it deceived neither party; but both had objects to gain by postponing for a short time the commencement of hostilities.¹

March 12.
¹ Thib. vii.
207, 208.

The original plan of the Austrians was to invade at

fine, the danger of universal subjugation threatens even the happy states of Austria, and their peaceable fortunate inhabitants, then does our country demand its deliverance from us, and we stand forth in its defence. On you, my brother-soldiers, are fixed the eyes of the universe, and of all those who still feel for national honour and national prosperity. You shall not incur the disgrace of being made the instruments of oppression; you shall not carry on the endless wars of ambition under distant climes; your blood shall never flow for foreign fleets or insatiable covetousness; nor on you shall the curse alight of annihilating distant nations, and, over the bodies of the slaughtered defenders of their country, paving the way for a foreigner to a usurped throne. A happier lot awaits you; the liberty of Europe has taken refuge under your banners. Your victories will loose its fetters, and your brothers in Germany, yet in the ranks of the enemy, long for their deliverance. On the fields of Ulm and Marengo, of which the enemy so often reminds us with ostentatious pride, we shall renew the glorious deeds of Würtzburg and Ostrach, of Stockach and Zurich, of Verona, the Trebbia, and Novi. We shall conquer a lasting peace for our country; but that great end is not to be attained without proportionate virtues. Unconditional subordination, strict discipline, persevering courage, unshaken steadiness in danger, are the companions of true fortitude. Nothing but a union of will, and joint co-operation of the whole, can lead to victory. I will

once Franconia, Lombardy, the Tyrol, and the Grand-duchy of Warsaw. In all these districts they had numerous and active partisans, and they confidently expected powerful aid from their exertions. For this purpose they had accumulated enormous masses of troops, above a hundred thousand strong, in Bohemia; from whence, as a central point, they were in a situation to issue in any direction which might seem advisable. They were, in March, grouped around Prague, in the north-western extremity of that country, between the Elbe, the Eger, the Moldau, and the Wittau. The object of this extraordinary concentration of troops was, to advance suddenly into the country of Baireuth, give assistance to the numerous ardent spirits and malcontents of that quarter of Germany, fall upon Davoust's corps which was assembled at Würzburg, before it could receive the reinforcements which were hastening to its support, or be electrified by the presence of Napoleon, and, if possible, drive it back by superior forces to the Rhine.* Such an event, it was well known, would at once bring to the Austrian standards a vast body of ardent recruits, whom the enormous exactions and grinding tyranny of the French armies had filled with unbounded hatred at their domi-

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20.

Austrian
plan of the
campaign.

be everywhere in the midst of you; you shall receive the first thanks of your country from your general on the field of battle. The patriotism of the Austrian nobility has anticipated your wants; this is a pledge of the national gratitude. Adorned with the marks of the public esteem, will I present to our sovereign, to the world, those brave men who have deserved well of their country. Civil virtues must also accompany your arms out of the field of battle: the real soldier is moderate, compassionate, humane; he knows the evils of war, and strives to lighten them. It is not the intention of our monarch to oppress foreign nations, but to deliver them, and to form with their princes a lasting peace, and maintain the general welfare and security."—*Ann. Reg.* 1809, 691; *App. to Chron.*

* The directions of the Aulic Council for the war in Italy and the Tyrol, were to concentrate both corps, under the command of the Archduke John, between Villach and Klagenfurth, and then advance in two columns: one by the Pusterthal into the Tyrol, and over the Brenner to Trent; the other by Ponteba to Bassano, and from thence to the Adige; while the care of observing the lower Isonzo was intrusted to the landwehr of Istria. The cabinet of Vienna calculated with much reason upon the expected insurrection in the Tyrol, to aid and support both these movements.—*STUTTERHEIM*, 56, 57; and *PELET*, i. 196.

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nation, and it was hoped would at the same time overcome the indecision of Prussia, and bring its disciplined battalions to the side of the Imperialists in the great contest for European freedom. This plan was ably conceived, and if carried into execution with the requisite alacrity and vigour, might have been attended with great results; for the French armies were very much scattered in the end of February, and, by issuing suddenly from the great salient fortress of Bohemia, and pressing forward towards the Rhine, the Archduke Charles might have entirely separated Oudinot, who lay in Suabia, from Davoust, who was cantoned on the banks of the Maine.¹

Feb. 27.
¹ Jom. ii.
152, 153.
Pelet, i. 189,
195. Stut.
40, 49.

21.
Plans of
Napoleon.
April 1.

The Austrians had taken Napoleon, in a certain degree, at unawares; as not only was the flower of his veteran troops in Spain, but the forces which still remained in Germany, though extremely formidable if once assembled together, were scattered from the Alps to the Baltic, at a great distance from each other. His plan, therefore, contrary to his usual policy, was strictly defensive in the outset, to gain time for the concentration of his troops. At the same time, as he deemed it unfitting that he himself should be at the head of his army before any decisive blows were struck, and where, possibly, disasters might be incurred, Berthier was despatched early in April to assume the command of the whole until the arrival of the Emperor—a convenient arrangement, as, if his operations proved successful, they would, of course, be ascribed to the intelligence and ability of his superior in command; if the reverse, the whole blame of a miscarriage might be laid upon himself. From the period of his arrival, the whole troops, both French and those of the Confederation of the Rhine, were formed into one army, to be called the *army of Germany*. It was divided into eight corps, commanded by the most distinguished marshals in the French service, and mustered two hundred thousand effective men. The Emperor was indefatigable in his efforts to provide subsistence, clothing, and ammu-

dition for this enormous multitude;* among other things, twenty-five million ball-cartridges were collected. But he enjoined that the system should be rigorously followed out of making war support war, and strictly forbade any stores or provisions being purchased in France for the use of the troops, if they could be procured by requisitions or military contributions on the other side of the Rhine. Rapid concentration of his troops was enjoined to Berthier around the Lech; but no offensive operations were to be commenced before the arrival of the Emperor, who was expected about the middle of April. To all who were acquainted with the character of his movements, it was evident that the moment he arrived, and deemed himself in sufficient strength, he would commence a furious onset, and pour with concentrated masses down the valley of the Danube.¹

The cabinet of Vienna took the initiative. On the 8th of April, the Austrian troops crossed the frontiers at once on the Inn, in Bohemia, in the Tyrol, and in Italy. Had the original plan of the Aulic Council been followed out, and the Archduke Charles, at the head of a hundred thousand men, debouched from Bohemia, midway between the Maine and the Black Forest, and advanced towards

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¹ Thib. vii.
214, 223.
Jom. iii.
152, 153.
Stut. 58,
64. Pelet,
i. 197, 209.

22.
Commence-
ment of hos-
tilities by
the Aus-
trians.

		MEN.
* Second corps, . . .	Marshal Lannes,	50,000
Third, . . .	Davoust,	60,000
Fourth, . . .	Massena,	50,000
Seventh, . . .	Lefebvre,	34,000
Eighth, . . .	Augereau,	20,000
Ninth, Saxon confederation and French,	Bernadotte,	50,000
Tenth, . . .	King of Westphalia,	25,000
Imperial Guard, . . .		22,000
Reserve cavalry, . . .	Bessières,	14,000
		<hr/>
		325,000

and 400 pieces of cannon.

But at least one hundred thousand of them had not yet arrived: the Guard and reserve cavalry were on their march from Spain; Bernadotte's corps was still at a distance in the north of Germany; and the contingents of the Confederation of the Rhine were far from being complete. Still a hundred and forty thousand French troops and sixty thousand of those of the Confederation might be relied on for active operations in the valley of the Danube.—

THIBAudeau, vii. 14.

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Mannheim, this commencement of hostilities might have been attended with most important effects ; for dissatisfaction with the French rule was universal in that quarter ; and if a powerful demonstration from England, on the coast of Flanders, had timeously seconded this irruption, the seat of war might have been permanently fixed on the middle and lower Rhine.* On the 17th March, Austria had a hundred and forty thousand men on the two banks of the Danube, within eight days' march of Ratisbon ; while Davoust only broke up from his cantonments in the north of Germany, on the Oder and lower Elbe, on that day ; Massena was still on the Rhine, and Oudinot alone at Augsburg, the Bavarians being on the Iser. Thus the complete separation of the French corps was a matter of perfect certainty, by a rapid advance towards Mannheim at that period. But the successful execution of this well-conceived design required a vigour of determination and alacrity of execution to which the Austrians were as yet strangers ; and the English cabinet were too great novices in the military art to be aware of the inestimable value of time in war. Thus the moment for decisive action was lost by both powers, and by hesitating till the period for striking the blow was past, and the French troops were concentrated on the Danube, Austria lost all the immense advantages of her central threatening position in Bohemia.¹

¹ Pelet, i.
190, 199.
Stat. 60,
65. Jom. i.
152, 153.

* The instructions of the Aulic Council in the outset of the campaign were, "to advance in large masses, and attack the French army wherever it might assemble, either on the Maine, the Naab, or the Danube. Should a French corps enter Bavaria, the *grand Austrian army* was not to swerve from its *direction*, but trust to arresting the movement on Bavaria, by threatening the advancing corps on the side of Ratisbon or Donauwörth. If Marshal Davoust retired in order to avoid any engagement before the arrival of his reinforcements, the grand Austrian army was nevertheless to continue to advance with all possible expedition, and take up a *central position between the Black Forest and the Maine*, and there be regulated by the forces of the enemy, and the chances of successful operations which were afforded. The issue of the war depends on this operation, and on the issue of the first battle, which will, in all probability, if successful, rouse the malcontents of Baireuth, overawe Saxony, and bring over to the standards of Austria great part of the troops of the Confederation of the Rhine which are now arrayed against her."—STUTTERHEIM, 64-69 ; PELET, i. 194.

When it was resolved to attack the French in Bavaria, the Aulic Council committed a second error, still greater than the former ; for instead of permitting the Archduke Charles, from his central position in Bohemia, to fall perpendicularly on the French corps, scattered to the south along the valley of the Danube, at the distance of only six or eight days' march, they ordered him to countermarch the great body of his forces, and open the campaign on the Inn ; a gratuitous fault, which gave his troops triple the distance to march, and the enemy triple the time to complete their preparations and concentrate their forces. At length, however, the toilsome and unnecessary countermarch was completed ; the Austrian columns, after being transported a hundred miles back towards Vienna, and across the Danube, were arrayed in dense masses on the right bank of the Inn ; and the Archduke, crossing that river in imposing strength, prepared to carry the seat of war into the vast and level plains which stretch from the southern bank of the Danube to the foot of the Alps. At the same moment, the long-wished-for signals were given from the frontiers of Styria and Salzburg, to the provinces of the Tyrol. With speechless transport, the brave mountaineers beheld the bale-fires glowing on the eastern boundaries of their romantic country. Instantly a thousand beacons were kindled over all its rugged surface ; the cliffs of the Brenner were reddened by the glare, the waters of the Eisach reflected its light ; and before the ascending sun had spread his rosy tint over the glaciers of the Glockner, the inhabitants of the icy steeps were warmed by the glow, which, at the voice of patriotism, called a nation of heroes to arms.¹

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23.

Impolitic
delay in the
early move-
ments.

April 10.

¹ Jom. i.
152, 153.
Thib. vii.
221. Pel.
i. 191, 205.
Stut. 60, 64.

The instructions of Napoleon to Berthier,* before

* "By the 1st April," said Napoleon, "the corps of Marshal Davoust, which broke up from the Oder and Lower Elbe on the 17th March, will be established between Nuremberg, Bamberg, and Baireuth ; Massena will be round Ulm, Oudinot between Augsburg and Donauwörth. From the 1st to the 15th, three French corps, 130,000 strong, besides 10,000 allies, the Bava-

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1809.

24.

First move-
ments of
the Aus-
trians, and
imminent
danger of
the French.Atlas,
Plate 53.

leaving Paris, were clear and precise ; viz. that if the enemy commenced his attack before the 15th, by which time it was calculated the bulk of his forces might be assembled around Ratisbon, the army was to be concentrated on the Lech around Donauwörth ; if after that date, at Ratisbon, guarding the right bank of the Danube from it to Passau. On the 12th, however, by means of the telegraph which the Emperor had established in central Germany, he was apprised at Paris of the crossing of the Inn by the Archduke and the commencement of hostilities. He instantly set out ; and with such precision were the movements of the immense force, which was converging from the mountains of Galicia and the banks of the Oder to the valley of the Danube, calculated, that the last arrived at the general point of rendezvous around Ratisbon, at the very moment when the Emperor was approaching from Paris. It was high time that he should arrive to take the command of the army ; for, in the interim, Berthier had brought it, by the confession of the French themselves, to the verge of destruction.* Instead of instantly following up the Emperor's instructions, by concentrating his forces at Ratisbon or Donauwörth,¹ he scattered them, in spite of the remonstrances

¹ Pelet, i. 225, 230.
Stat. 66, 70.
Jom. i. 159.

rians in advance on the Iser, and the Würtembergers in reserve, may be concentrated at Ratisbon or Ingolstadt. Strong *têtes-de-pont* should be thrown up at Augsburg, to secure the passage of the Lech ; at Ingolstadt, in order to be able to debouch to the left bank of the Danube ; and above all, at Passau, which should be put in a condition to hold out two or three months. The Emperor's object is to concentrate his army as soon as possible at Ratisbon : the position on the Lech is to be assumed only if it is attacked before the concentration at the former town is possible. The second corps will be at Ratisbon by the 10th, and on that day Bessières will also arrive with the reserve cavalry of the Guard ; Davoust will be at Nuremberg, Massena at Augsburg, Lefebvre at one or two marches from Ratisbon. Headquarters may then be safely established in that town, in the midst of 200,000 men, guarding the right bank of the Danube, from Ratisbon to Passau, by means of which stream provisions and supplies of every sort will be procured in abundance. Should the Austrians debouch from Bohemia or Ratisbon, Davoust and Lefebvre should fall back on Ingolstadt or Donauwörth."—NAPOLEON'S *Instructions to BERTHIER*, April 1, 1809 ; PELET, i. 212, 213.

* "The Emperor, on his road to the army," says Jomini, "felt the liveliest disquietude at the posture of affairs—Berthier had brought the army within a hair's-breadth of destruction."—JOMINI, iii. 159.

of Davoust and Massena, in the dangerous view of stopping the advance of the Austrians at all points. Nothing but the tardiness of their opponents saved the French army from the most serious calamities.

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But while Berthier dispersed his troops as if to render them the more accessible to the blows of the Imperialists, the Archduke moved forward with such slowness as if he desired to give them time to concentrate their forces before he commenced his attack. They crossed the Inn on the 10th at Braunau and other points, and on the 16th they had only advanced as far as the Isar, a distance of twenty leagues. On the latter day they attacked the bridge of Landshut, over that river; and at the same time crossed over a division at Dingolfing, farther down its course, which threatened to cut off the communications of General Deroy, who commanded the Bavarians placed in garrison at Landshut, and obliged them to evacuate that important town. The whole line of the Isar was now abandoned by the Bavarians, who fell back in haste towards Ratisbon and Donauwörth; while the Austrians, in great strength, crossed that river at all points, and directed their steps on the great road to Nuremberg, evidently toward the bridges of Ratisbon, Neustadt, and Kehlheim, in order to make themselves masters of both banks of the Danube. In making this movement, the Archduke was acting on the principle which his campaign of 1796 had made him consider as an axiom, "that the possession of the two banks of the Danube from Ratisbon to Donauwörth, gave to any belligerent army in southern Germany the key of a certain victory." Yet even then, when their forces were concentrated, and greatly superior to those of the enemy as yet assembled, and when everything depended on rapidity of movement, they advanced only two or three leagues a-day: so inveterate were the habits of tardiness and delay which characterise the German character.¹

25.
Imprudent
dispersion
of his forces
by Berthier,
and slow
advance of
the Aus-
trians.
April 16.

¹ Jom. ii.
159, 160.
Pel. i. 225,
239. Stat.
64, 72.
Bign. viii.
196.

The approach of the formidable masses of the Aus-

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LVI.

1809.

26.

Faulty
movements
of Berthier
to arrest
their pro-
gress.

April 16.

trians, however, fully a hundred and twenty thousand strong, even though advancing with the pace of a tortoise, threw Berthier into an agony of indecision. It then evidently appeared how much the major-general of the army was indebted for the reputation he enjoyed to the directions of the Emperor ; and how different a capacious talent for the management of details is, from the eagle glance which can direct the movements of the whole.

Despite all his remonstrances, he compelled Davoust to concentrate his corps at Ratisbon, while at the very same moment, he ordered Massena to defend the line of the Lech—separating thus the two principal corps of the French army by at least thirty-five leagues from each other, and exposing the former, with his magnificent corps, the flower of the army, to be overwhelmed by the Archduke before any adequate reinforcements could be brought up to his support. Orders were at the same time given to Lefebvre, Wrede, and Oudinot, placing them in three lines, one behind another, across Bavaria, in so useless and absurd a position, that more than one of the marshals did not scruple to ascribe it to treachery—a charge, however, from which the whole character of Berthier, and the uninterrupted confidence he enjoyed from the Emperor, is sufficient to exculpate him. As it was, the scattered position which he gave to the army over a line of forty leagues in extent, with numerous undefended apertures between the corps, was such, that a little more activity on the part of the Archduke would have exposed it to certain destruction, and brought the Austrian columns in triumph to the Rhine.^{1*}

¹ Pelet, i.
240, 249.
Thib. vii.
221, 224.
Jom. ii. 159,
160. Sav.
iv. 44, 54.

* “You cannot imagine,” said Napoleon, “in what a condition I found the army on my arrival, and to what dreadful reverses it was exposed, if we had had to deal with an enterprising enemy. I shall take care that I am not surprised again in such a manner.” And to Berthier himself he wrote from Donauwörth, the moment he arrived on the 17th :—“What you have done appears so strange, that if I was not aware of your friendship I should think you were betraying me; Davoust is at this moment more completely at the disposal of the Archduke than of myself.”—PELET, v. 248 ; THIBAudeau, vii. 224 ; SAVARY, iv. 44.

Meanwhile the Archduke, notwithstanding the tardiness of his movements, was inundating Bavaria with his troops. Hiller had advanced to Mosburg; Jellachich had occupied Munich, from whence the King of Bavaria hastily fled to Stuttgart to meet Napoleon; the two corps left in Bohemia had crossed the frontier, and were approaching by leisurely marches towards Ratisbon; while the Archduke himself, with four corps, a hundred thousand strong, was drawing near to Abensberg, Neustadt, and Kehlheim, midway between Ratisbon and Donauwörth. Berthier had gone to the former town, where Davoust was stationed with sixty thousand men; but it seemed next to impossible to extricate him from his perilous situation, as Massena was at Augsburg, thirty-five leagues to the south-west, and the centre of the Archduke was interposed, in appalling strength, right between them. The Bavarians under Wrede, the corps of Lefebvre, and a division of cuirassiers, were indeed in front of the Archduke around Neustadt; but they could with difficulty maintain their own ground, and were in no condition to extricate Davoust, who, threatened by a hundred thousand Austrians under the Archduke on the south of the Danube, and forty thousand descending from Bohemia on the north, seemed destined for no other fate than that of Mack, four years before, at Ulm.¹

Matters were in this critical state when Napoleon, early in the morning of the 17th, arrived at Donauwörth. Instantly he began inquiring of every one concerning the position, destination, and movements of the Austrian corps; sent out officers in all directions to acquire accurate information; and next morning despatched the most pressing orders to Massena to hasten, at least with his advanced guards and cavalry, to Pfaffenhofen, a considerable town, nearly halfway from Augsburg to the seat of war round Neustadt and Kehlheim.* Davoust, at the

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27.

The advance
of the Aus-
trians almost
cuts in two
the French
army.
April 17.

¹ Pelet, i.
262, 263.
Thib. vii.
225, 226.
Jom. ii. 160.
Stat. 72, 80.
Sav. iv. 44,
45.

28.
Napoleon
instantly
concentrates
his army.

* "It is indispensable that Oudinot with his corps, and your three other divisions, with your cuirassiers and cavalry, should sleep at Pfaffenhofen,

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

¹ Sav. iv. 50,
51. Pelet, i.
263, 267.
Thib. vii.
226, 227.

29.

Movements
of the two
armies to-
wards each
other.

same time, received orders to move on the 18th in the direction of Neustadt, so as to form a junction with the Bavarians and Würtembergers and Lefebvre, who had retired to that quarter before the Archduke Charles; so that in the next twenty-four hours these two marshals would be twenty leagues nearer each other, and, having the troops of the Confederation in the interval between them, might almost be said to be in communication. At the same time, dissembling his fears, the Emperor addressed to his soldiers a nervous proclamation, in which, loudly reproaching the Austrians with the commencement of hostilities, he promised to lead them to yet more glorious fields of fame.¹*

Notwithstanding the pressing instance of the Emperor, and their own sense of the urgency of the case, Davoust and Massena could not reach the places assigned to them so early as he had anticipated, and the former, in consequence, was exposed to the most imminent danger. The messenger ordering Davoust to draw towards the Lech had been despatched from Donauwörth at two o'clock in the morning of the 17th, and his instructions

to-morrow night; those in the rear, who are still at Landsberg, should do their utmost to reach Aichach, or at least get on as far as they can on the road from Augsburg to Aichach. One word will explain to you the urgency of affairs. Prince Charles, with eighty thousand men, debouched yesterday from Landshut on Ratisbon; the Bavarians contended the whole day with his advanced guard. Orders have been despatched to Davoust to move with sixty thousand men in the direction of Neustadt, where he will form a junction with the Bavarians. To-morrow (19th) all your troops who can be mustered at Pfaffenhofen, with the Würtembergers, a division of cuirassiers, and every man you can collect, should be in a condition to fall on the rear of Prince Charles. A single glance must show you that never was more pressing occasion for diligence and activity than at present. With sixty thousand good troops, Davoust may indeed make head against the Archduke; but I consider him ruined without resource, if Oudinot and your three divisions are not on his rear before daybreak on the 19th, and I look to you to inspire the soldiers with all they should feel on so momentous an occasion. The enemy is ruined without resource, if your corps and that of Oudinot debouch before daybreak on Pfaffenhofen, and fall on the rear of the Archduke. In the 18th, 19th, and 20th, the whole affairs of Germany will be decided." To this was added a postscript in the Emperor's own hand, "Activité, vitesse. Je me recommande à vous."—NAPOLEON TO MASSENA, *Donauwörth, 18th April, 1809*; SAVARY, iv. 51, 52; BIGNON, viii. 195.

* "Soldiers! the territory of the Confederation of the Rhine has been vio-

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LVI.
1809.

were to march forthwith on Ingolstadt; while Wrede with his Bavarians was stopped in his retreat at Neustadt, and ordered to concentrate with the Würtembergers, behind the Abens. Davoust received his orders at midnight of the 17th, but his divisions were dispersed in the villages around Ratisbon, as well as in that town, and could not be instantly put in motion; while the bulk of Massena's forces, being six or eight leagues behind Augsburg, could not be concentrated till the night of the 18th, even at that town, or reach Pfaffenhofen till late on the following evening. Davoust, having collected his whole force during the 18th, commenced the evacuation of that town at daybreak on the following morning, and by mid-day on the 19th was already approaching Neustadt, leaving only a single regiment, three thousand strong, to guard the important bridge of Ratisbon. On the same day the Archduke divided the army which he commanded in person into two parts; and while he left the Archduke Louis with fifteen thousand men to watch the troops of the Confederation on the Abens, he himself, with seventy-five thousand, moved towards Ratisbon, in hopes of making himself master of that important passage over the Danube during the absence of Davoust's corps. By this means he would at once gain possession of both banks of that river, and open up a secure communication with his two corps under Klenau, on its opposite bank. The worst was to be apprehended for Davoust, if, in the course of his march to Neustadt, he had encountered this formidable mass, moving in a direction almost perpendicular to his flank,¹ and not more than a few leagues dis-

April 18.

April 19.

¹ Stat. 76,
81. Sav. iv.
50. Thib.
vii. 226,
228. Pel. i.
281, 293.

lated. The Austrian general supposes that we are to fly at the sight of his eagles, and abandon our allies to his mercy. I arrive with the rapidity of lightning in the midst of you. Soldiers! I was surrounded by your bayonets when the Emperor of Austria arrived at my bivouac in Moravia; you heard him implore my clemency, and swear an eternal friendship. Conquerors in three wars, Austria has owed everything to our generosity; three times she has perjured herself! Our former successes are a sure guarantee for our future triumphs. Let us march, then, and at our aspect let the enemy recognise his conquerors."—*Moniteur*, 26th April 1809; and THIBAUDEAU, vii. 224.

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1809.

30.

Napoleon's
plan of oper-
ations. Its
great dan-
gers.

tant. The two armies crossed without the bulk of the forces meeting.

Napoleon's plan was now clearly formed: it was to concentrate his whole army as rapidly as possible on the Abens, in advance of Pfaffenhofen; and, refusing his left, to throw his right, under Massena, forward, so as to drive back the Archduke Louis; separate altogether the Grand Army under the Archduke Charles from Jellachich and Hiller, who were nearer the Alps, and force it up into the narrow space formed by the bend of the Danube at Ratisbon. He then hoped either to compel it to surrender, from the impossibility of finding an egress, if that town was still held by the French troops, or at least induce the sacrifice of its artillery and baggage in the confusion of defiling in front of a victorious army over the narrow bridge which that town commanded. But the execution of this plan was exceedingly hazardous, and in presence of an enterprising enemy might have led to fatal results. Abensberg was the vital point: whoever reached it first in sufficient strength, gained the means of preventing the concentration of his adversary. Davoust, to reach his destination, required to traverse the defiles of Abach and Postsaal, within two leagues of Abensberg, and this defile was much nearer the camp of the Archduke Charles on the 18th at Rohr, than the point from which Davoust set out from Ratisbon. Eighty thousand Austrians might with ease have occupied the important posts of Abensberg and Postsaal, which would have effectually barred the way to Davoust's corps, and thrown him back upon Ratisbon, and the *cul-de-sac* formed by the bend of the Danube, over which there was no other bridge—the very fate which Napoleon designed for the army of Prince Charles. When, therefore, instead of pushing on with an overwhelming force to this vital point, the Archduke Charles, when within a day's march of it, divided his army on the 18th, and bent his course, with the bulk of his forces, towards Ratisbon,¹ now almost destitute of

¹ Jom. iii.
164, 165.
Thib. vii.
227. Pel. i.
286, 295.

defenders, Napoleon had some reason to say that his star had not yet deserted him.*

The covering troops of Davoust, however, encountered and had a rude shock with those of the Archduke, near the village of Thaun. St Hilaire and Friant had arrived on the heights of Saalhaupt and Tengen, where they were stationed in order to protect the French left, and cover the march of the remainder of the corps, with its artillery and trains, through the important defile of Postsaal, when the light cavalry of Hohenzollern appeared in sight, whose province in like manner was to cover the left of the Austrian army, and secure their march to Ratisbon. Fresh troops were successively brought up by either party as the day advanced, and before the evening twenty thousand men were engaged on both sides. The combat soon became extremely warm; some woods on the field were successively taken and retaken, and the greatest valour was mutually displayed. At length a violent thunder-storm, which came on at six o'clock, separated the combatants, after each had sustained a loss of three thousand men, without either being able to boast of a decisive advantage. But although both retained their positions, yet as the French, under cover of their resistance at this point, succeeded in passing unmolested through the important defile,¹ and before nightfall reached

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31.

Actions
between
Davoust
and Hohen-
zollern at
Thaun.
April 19.

¹ Pel. i. 294,
300. Stut.
84, 89. Jom.
iii. 165.

* Napoleon's plans at this critical juncture are clearly developed in the letter which he wrote to Massena at twelve o'clock noon on the 19th. "Prince Charles, with his whole army, was this morning a day's march from Ratisbon, having his base and communications on Landshut. Davoust has evacuated Ratisbon to move upon Neustadt, and join the Bavarians: I look, therefore, for an affair every minute; nevertheless, it is now noon, and I have not heard the cannon. You will perceive at a glance that I am keeping back my left to throw forward my right, which you form, and which to-day should enter into action. Push Oudinot forward to Neustadt. From thence I shall probably direct the 4th corps to Landshut; and then Prince Charles, attacked on his left, will find he has lost his line of operations upon the Isar. Everything will be cleared up to-day; the moments are precious; hours must be counted. Twelve or fifteen thousand of such rabble as you have defeated this morning, should be easily disposed of by six thousand of our people."—*NAPOLEON to MASSENA, 19th April 1809; PELET, i. 285, 286.*

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32.
Positions
of the two
armies on
the night of
the 19th.

the vital point of Abensberg, overthrowing in their course a small Austrian column under Thierry, they with reason claimed the victory.

Reassured as to the security of his centre by the junction thus effected by Davoust with the Bavarians under Lefebvre, Napoleon resolved to commence a vigorous offensive, and by advancing his right against Landshut, both threaten the Archduke's communications, and throw him back into the net prepared for him by the bend of the Danube at Ratisbon. Early on the morning of the 19th, before this bloody combat commenced on the banks of the Danube at Thaun, Massena had encountered a body of five thousand infantry and cavalry at Pfaffenhofen, and defeated it in a few minutes, with the loss of several hundred killed and wounded. In the course of the day, he had concentrated all his corps at that place: Oudinot was at Freising, with his light troops stretching along the Isar, so as to intercept all communication between the Archduke and his left wing at Munich: the corps of Davoust was grouped in the villages around Abensberg: while Lefebvre, Wrede, and Vandamme, with the troops of the Confederation, were at Neustadt and Biburg. Thus the whole French army, at length concentrated in a line of ten leagues broad, was in a condition to take part in any common operations on the following day. The Austrian troops were assembled in the space formed by the Isar as a base, and the bend of the Danube at Ratisbon as a curve; Lichtenstein was at Eglofsheim, Hohenzollern at Hausen, Rosenberg at Dinzing, and the remainder in the villages from Mainburg on the south to the neighbourhood of Ratisbon on the north; but their principal masses were grouped around Echmühl. They were less prepared than the French, however, for a decisive affair on the morrow, being spread over a surface at least sixteen leagues in extent;¹ and what was still worse, the great mass under the Archduke was separated, by an unoccupied space four

¹ Jom. iii.
164, 165.
Pel. i. 305,
306. Stutt.
90, 92.

leagues in breadth, from the corps of General Hiller at Mainburg and that of the Archduke Louis at Siegenburg on the Abens; and two powerful corps under Klenau were uselessly lost on the northern bank of the Danube, where there was not an enemy to oppose them.

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Being well aware, from the position of the respective armies, that a decisive affair was at hand, Napoleon adopted the generous, and at the same time prudent policy, of combating in person at the head of the troops of the Confederation, leaving the native French to their inherent valour, their experienced skill, and the direction of their veteran marshals. He repaired to the headquarters of their commanders, and, according to custom, visited at daybreak the bivouacs of the troops, which he traversed from right to left along their whole extent, accompanied only by the officers and generals of the Bavarians. He was received with the loudest acclamations, and a transport rivalling that of his own veteran soldiers; so contagious is the feeling of military ardour, and so winning was the confidence with which the mighty conqueror threw himself on the support of his new allies. Clapping the prince-royal of Bavaria on the shoulder, he exclaimed, when the inspection was finished—"Well, prince-royal, this is the way in which one must be King of Bavaria; when your turn comes, all the world will follow you if you do the same: but if you remain at home, every one will go to sleep; farewell to empire and glory." To the Würtembergers, at the same time, he spoke of the glories they had acquired while combating the Austrians in the wars of the Great Frederick; and of the laurels which they had won in the last campaign in Silesia. These words, translated into German by their respective officers, excited great enthusiasm, which was soon raised to the very highest pitch by the proclamation to the troops, in which the Emperor declared that, without any French to aid them,¹ he was to combat that day

33.
Napoleon's
address to
the German
confederates.

April 20.

¹ Sav. iv. 49.
Thib. vii.
229, 231.
Pel. ii. 8,
10.

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1809.

34.
Position
and forces
of the par-
ties.
April 20.

Atlas,
Plate 54.

at their head, and announced a glorious destiny to their countries.* Perceiving that the spirit of the troops was now roused to the highest point, the Emperor gave the signal to engage.

Notwithstanding, however, the deserved confidence which he placed in the German troops, Napoleon did not trust the result of the day exclusively to their exertions. Lannes, who the day before had joined the army from Saragossa, was intrusted with the command of two French divisions, drawn from Massena's corps, which formed the left of the centre, under Napoleon's immediate command, and was to advance on the great road from Kehlheim to Landshut; the Würtembergers, under Vandamme, were in the centre, close to Abensberg; the Bavarians on the right, directly opposite to Biburg and Siegenburg, under Wrede. Had the Austrian corps been concentrated, they might successfully have combated this aggregate of allied troops, whose total strength did not exceed sixty-five thousand men; but, unfortunately, they were so much dispersed as to be incapable of opposing any effective resistance to the enemy. Hiller, with twenty-two thousand, was in march from Mainburg to Pfeffenhausen; the Archduke Louis, with ten thousand, guarded Siegenburg, with its bridge over the Abens; the Prince of Reuss, with fifteen thousand, lay in the rear of Kirchdorf; General Thierry, with five thousand, at Offensteller. Thus, above fifty thousand were in front of the French; but scattered over a space several leagues broad, and without any centre or plan of operations.¹

Not expecting an attack on that day, they were

* "Bavarians! I do not come among you as the Emperor of the French, but as chief of the Confederation of the Rhine and protector of your country. You combat to-day alone against the Germans; not a single Frenchman is to be seen in the first line; they are only in reserve, and the enemy are not aware of their presence. I place entire confidence in your valour. I have extended the limits of your country; but I now see that I have not done enough. Hereafter, I will render you so great, that, to sustain a war against Austria, you will no longer have need of my assistance. Two hundred years

¹ Stat. 92,
96. Jom. ii.
168, 169.
Pel. ii. 12,
18.

leisurely performing the various movements assigned to them, with a view to the concentration of their troops for the morrow, when they were simultaneously attacked at all points by the enemy, who passed at once from cautious defensive to furious offensive operations. They made, in consequence, but a feeble resistance ; or rather, they were attacked at so many different points, and so much in detail, that no one general could take upon himself the responsibility of halting to give battle. The day was a sort of running fight, in many detached places, rather than a regular engagement. It proved, however, very disastrous to the Austrians. Thierry, whose troops had not recovered the rout of the preceding day, assailed by Lannes with greatly superior forces, was thrown back in confusion upon Hiller's troops at Rottenburg, who, coming up in haste from Mainburg, instead of arresting, increased the general disorder, and the whole were driven across the bridge of the Laber, which Lannes traversed with bayonets fixed and colours flying. The Prince of Reuss and Bianchi, attacked in front by Lefebvre, and in flank by Vandamme with the Würtembergers, deemed themselves fortunate in being able to escape to Pffenhausen without any serious loss ; whither they were immediately followed by the Archduke Louis, who had been driven from the bridge of Siegenburg, closely pursued by Wrede and the Bavarians, who, on this occasion, emulated the vigour and rapidity of the French troops. The Austrians were not routed at any point, and no artillery was taken ; nevertheless, they had to lament the loss of eight thousand men ; the Archduke's communications with Landshut were thrown open to the enemy ;¹

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LVI.

1809.

35.

Combats of
Abensberg.

¹ Stat. 92,
99. Pel. ii.
12, 23. Thib.
vii. 232.
Jom. ii. 168,
169.

the Bavarian banners, protected by France, resisted Austria ; now we are on the march for Vienna, where we shall punish her for the mischief which she has always done to your forefathers. Austria intended to have partitioned your country into baronies, and divided you among her regiments. Bavarians, this war is the last which you will have to sustain against your enemies : attack them with the bayonet, and annihilate them."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 230, 231.

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LVI.

1809.

36.
Hiller pur-
sued to
Landshut
by Napo-
leon.
April 21.

Atlas,
Plate 53.

they had been deprived of the advantages of the initiative ; and, what is of incalculable importance, had been unsuccessful in the first considerable action of the campaign.

Napoleon was not slow in following up the important blow thus struck in the outset of operations. His great object was to throw himself upon the Archduke's communications ; and the success thus gained against the covering corps of Prince Louis, by opening up the great road to Landshut, rendered that undertaking an easy task. To cover the movement, and distract the Archduke's attention, Davoust received orders to threaten the enemy on the side of Ratisbon, where the bulk of their forces was assembled ; but the serious operations were conducted by the Emperor in person, against the retiring columns of Hiller, Bianchi, and the Archduke Louis. Uniting their shattered troops, these generals had fallen back in the direction of Landshut, in the hopes of preserving that important passage in the rear, with the immense stores of baggage and ammunition which it contained, from the attacks of the enemy. Thither, however, they were instantly followed by Napoleon, who, putting himself on horseback at daybreak on the 21st, moved every disposable bayonet and sabre in the direction of Landshut ; while Massena, on his right, still further in advance, manœuvred in such a way, between Pfaffenhofen and Mosburg, as to render a retreat upon Landshut a matter of absolute necessity to the Austrians, to prevent their communications being instantly cut off. At the same time Davoust, on the left, was to engage the attention of the Archduke Charles so completely as to prevent him from rendering any effectual assistance.¹

¹ Stat. 100,
104. Pel. ii.
3, 5, 37.

37.
His defeat
by the Em-
peror.

These movements, admirably combined, and executed with uncommon vigour and precision, proved completely successful. The rearguard of the Archduke Louis, warmly attacked on different occasions during the night, was thrown back in disorder in the morning on Furth and Arth, by roads already choked with baggage waggons

and all the immense *matériel* of the Austrian grand army. Their confusion became altogether inextricable when they approached the valley of the Isar and the environs of Landshut, which are traversed only by two chaussées, passing for a considerable distance on the western side through low swamps, altogether impassable for artillery or chariots. To strengthen the rearguard while the retiring columns were defiling through these perilous straits, Hiller ordered General Vincent to hold firm with the cavalry at their entrance. But at that very moment Napoleon, accompanied by a powerful train of artillery, and the cuirassiers of Nansouty, arrived on the ground, and instantly, under cover of a tremendous fire of cannon, the French horse advanced to the charge. Vincent's dragoons were unable to withstand the shock; horse, foot, and cannon were thrown together in wild disorder on the chaussées, and a vast quantity of artillery and baggage abandoned by the Austrians, who crowded in utter disorder into Landshut. But even behind its ramparts they were no longer in safety; for on the same morning Massena had gained possession of the bridge of Mosburg, and was rapidly advancing, agreeably to his orders, down the right, or eastern bank of the Isar. Alarmed by his approach, the Austrians put the torch to the long wooden bridge which leads into the town, and kept up a heavy fire upon it from the neighbouring houses and churches. General Mouton, however, at the head of the French grenadiers, advanced through a shower of balls, amidst the flames, to the portcullis, which was speedily demolished, and the heroic assailants burst into the town. Hiller now only fought to gain time to draw off his artillery and chariots; but such was the rapidity of Massena's advance, whose dense columns now covered the opposite side of the river, and had reached to within a mile of the town, that a large part of them required to be sacrificed.¹ The Austrian general at length, after having made a most

¹ Stat. 101,
109. Pel.
ii. 35, 49.
Jom. iii.
170, 171.
Thib. vii.
232, 233.

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LVI.

1809.

gallant resistance, drew off towards the Inn in the direction of Oetting, where he crossed on the following day, having lost nearly six thousand men, twenty-five pieces of cannon, six hundred ammunition waggons, a pontoon train, and an enormous quantity of baggage, in this disastrous affair.*

38.
Operations
of Davoust
and the
Archduke
Charles in
the centre.

The task assigned to Davoust, while Napoleon was in this manner destroying the left wing of the Imperialists, and laying bare their vital line of communications to Landshut and the Inn, was to occupy the attention of the Archduke Charles, who with the whole centre of the army had diverged to Ratisbon, in order to make himself master of the important bridge at that place, and open up a communication with the two corps of Klenau and Bellegarde on the opposite side of the Danube. Rightly judging that the best way to impose upon his adversary, and inspire him with a mistaken idea of his own strength, was to assume the offensive, the French marshal, early on the morning of the 21st, commenced an attack in the woody country which lies on the banks of the Laber, and after a warm contest drove Hohenzollern's Austrians across that river. Though their positions were strong, and their forces numerous, yet Hohenzollern was so much deceived by the vivacity of the French attack, and by the idea that two divisions of their army would never have ventured, unsupported, to hazard an assault upon the dense masses of his own and Rosenberg's corps, that he never doubted that it was only a part of a general movement to pierce the Austrian centre, and that he would soon have Napoleon thundering on his flank. Rosenberg's corps, accordingly, at noon fell

* A singular trait of heroism occurred on this occasion on the part of an Austrian grenadier, which is recorded with generous eulogy by the French historian Pelet. Two companies of Austrian grenadiers of Teuchmeister were closely pursued by the French cavalry, and on the point of being surrounded. A grenadier ran to an ammunition waggon and set it on fire; he was instantly blown up with it: but the explosion, and the admiration which the gallant action inspired in the pursuers, arrested the pursuit, and saved his comrades.—STUTTERHEIM, 108; PELET, ii. 48.

back and took up a new position on the left bank of the Laber, between that river and Laichling; and Hohenzollern, having descended the right bank of the river to Echmühl, and recrossed there with the greater part of his men, forty thousand Austrian foot and five thousand horse were in two hours collected there, where they were soon assailed by thirty-five thousand French and Bavarians, under Davoust, Lefebvre, and Montbrun, whom the Emperor, after the victory of Abensberg, had detached to assist in that quarter, while he himself followed up his decisive successes against Hiller at Landshut. The action was warmly contested till nightfall, when both parties maintained their positions; and though each had to lament the loss of three thousand men killed and wounded, both claimed the victory. But, as the operations of Davoust were intended rather as a feint than a serious attack, and they had completely the desired effect of preventing any reinforcements being sent from the centre to the left wing under Hiller, then in the act of being crushed by the overwhelming legions of the Emperor, the French with reason claimed the advantage.¹

While these important events were shaking the Austrian left wing and centre, the Archduke Charles with the main strength of the army was pressing the attack on Ratisbon. That town, commanding the only stone bridge over the Danube below Ulm, and opening up a direct communication with the two Austrian corps on its northern bank, was at all times a point of consequence. But it had now become, unknown to the Austrians, of incalculable importance, as affording the only line of retreat for the army, now that its communication with the Inn was cut off by the capture of Landshut, and the alarming progress of the Emperor on the left. Fully sensible of the value of such an acquisition, the Archduke, as soon as Davoust had left the town, ordered Kollowrath to attack it on the northern, and Lichtenstein on the southern side.

¹ Stat. 109,
115. Pel. ii.
49, 57. Jom.
ii. 172, 173.
Thib. vii.
233. Da-
voust's Re-
port. Pelet,
ii. 416.

39.
Attack and
capture of
Ratisbon
by the
Austrians.

April 20.

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LVI.

1809.

The former quickly obeyed his orders, and appeared on the 19th in great strength in the villages at the northern extremity of the bridge, which were carried by assault. Soon after, a dense column burst open the gates, and advanced by the great street to the northern end of the bridge; but, being there stopped by the palisades, and severely galled by a cross-fire from the houses, it was obliged to retire after sustaining a severe loss. In the afternoon, however, Lichtenstein, with the advanced guard of the grand Austrian army, approached from the southern side, and attempts were made by the French garrison to destroy the bridge. But that solid structure, the work of the Romans, composed of large blocks of stone strongly cemented by Pozzuolo cement, was still, after having stood for seventeen hundred years, so firm, that it resisted all attempts at demolition by ordinary implements; and the powder of the garrison was so much exhausted, that they had not the means of blowing it up. Deeming resistance impracticable, and having nearly expended his ammunition, the French colonel surrendered at discretion. Thus were the successes in the shock of these two redoubtable antagonists in some degree balanced; for, if the French had gained possession of Landshut, and the communications of the grand Austrian army with Vienna, they had lost Ratisbon, the key to both banks of the Danube; and, if they had five thousand prisoners to exhibit, taken in the combats of Abensberg and Landshut, the Austrians could point with exultation to the unusual spectacle of an entire regiment, nearly three thousand strong, with its eagle and standards, which had fallen into their hands.¹

¹ Stat. 114, 120. Pel. ii. 24, 32. Jom. ii. 169. Thib. vii. 232.

40.
Preparatory
movements
on both
sides.

Matters were now evidently approaching a crisis between the Archduke and Napoleon, and both these able generals concentrated their forces, to engage in it with advantage. Conceiving that the French Emperor was at a distance, following up his successes against Hiller, the Austrian general resumed the movement towards

Neustadt, which he had so unhappily abandoned three days before, and having brought Kollowrath, with his whole corps, over to the southern bank of the Danube, concentrated eighty thousand men between Abensberg and Ratisbon; Bellegarde, with his corps, above twenty-five thousand strong, was so far removed, without any assignable reason, that he could not approach nearer on that day to the scene of action than Stadt-am-Hoff, at the northern end of the bridge of Ratisbon. The eighty thousand men, however, whom he had assembled, would in all probability have been able to make head against all the forces which Napoleon could bring against them, were it not that, instead of grouping them together in one field, the Archduke moved Kollowrath and Lichtenstein, forty thousand strong, on the great road to Neustadt, by the defile of Abach, which Davoust had previously traversed, throwing thus the weight of his forces against the French left, and intending to menace their rear and communications, in the same way as they had done with the Austrian left, by the capture of Landshut. But Napoleon was in too great strength to be disquieted by such a demonstration, and leaving only a curtain of light troops to retard the advance of the Austrians in that direction, he concentrated all his forces to bear down upon their centre at ECHMÜHL and Laichling, the scene of such obstinate fighting on the preceding day. At day-break on the 22d the Emperor set out from Landshut, taking with him the whole of Lannes' and the greater part of Massena's corps, the Würtembergers, the reserve under Oudinot, which, coming up from the rear, received in the night that direction, and the Guards and cuirassiers just arrived from Spain. Thus one-half of the Archduke's army, under Rosenberg and Hohenzollern, not forty thousand strong, was to be exposed to the blows of above seventy-five thousand French, flushed with victory, and led on by the Emperor in person.¹

The Austrians, waiting for the arrival of Kollowrath's

¹ Stat. 115,
125. Pel. ii.
59, 75. Jom.
ii. 173, 174.
Sav. iv. 53.

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LVI.

1809.

41.

Description
of the field
of battle.

Atlas,
Plate 55.

corps from the north of the Danube, were not in a condition to prosecute their offensive movement against the French left, till after mid-day. They had arrived at the defile of Abach, however, and were driving the light troops of Davoust before them, when a loud cannonade on the extreme left announced the arrival of the Emperor on that weakly guarded part of the line. As they arrived on the top of the hills of Lintach, which separate the valley of the Isar from that of the Laber, the French, who came up from Landshut, beheld the field of battle stretched out like a map before them. From the marshy meadows which bordered the shores of the Laber, rose a succession of hills, one above another, in the form of an amphitheatre, with their slopes cultivated and diversified by hamlets, and beautiful forests clothing the higher ground. The villages of Echmühl and Laichling, separated by a large copsewood, appeared in view, with the great road to Ratisbon winding up the acclivities behind them. The meadows were green with the first colours of spring; the osiers and willows which fringed the streams that intersected them were just bursting into leaf; and the trees which bordered the roadside already cast an agreeable shade upon the dusty and beaten highway which lay beneath their boughs. The French soldiers involuntarily paused as they arrived at the summit, to gaze on this varied and interesting scene; but soon other emotions than those of admiration of nature swelled the breasts of the warlike multitude who thronged to the spot. In the intervals of these woods artillery was to be seen; amidst those villages standards were visible; and long white lines, with the glancing of helmets and bayonets on the higher ground, showed the columns of Rosenberg and Hohenzollern already in battle array, in very advantageous positions, on the opposite side of the valley.¹ Joyfully the French troops descended into the low grounds; while the Emperor galloped to the front, and, hastily surveying

¹ Pel. ii. 76, 77.

the splendid but intricate scene, immediately formed his plan of attack.

The plan of Napoleon was to cut the Austrians off from their whole remaining communications with the Isar and Inn, and, by throwing them back upon Ratisbon and Bohemia as their only line of retreat, sever them entirely from the support and protection of Vienna. With this view he began the action, advancing his right in great strength under Lannes, who commanded the divisions Gudin and St Hilaire, belonging to Davoust's corps, who soon commenced a furious attack upon the Austrian left, which his great superiority of force enabled him to turn and drive back. At the same time, the Würtemburgers were brought up to the attack of Echmühl in the centre; but the tremendous fire of the Austrian batteries at that point so shattered their ranks, that, though repeatedly brought again to the charge by their French officers, they were always repulsed, and sustained a very heavy loss. Finding that the village could not be carried by an attack in front, Lannes detached the division Gudin, which assailed in flank the guns that protected it: this rendered it necessary to draw back the artillery, or point them in another direction; and, aided by this diversion, the Würtemburgers at length dislodged their antagonists from this important post. At the same time Davoust resumed the offensive on the side of Abach, and, by a vigorous effort, made himself master of Unter Laichling and the woods which adjoin it, so as to prevent the enemy from drawing any support from that quarter to the left, which was principally menaced. The corps of Rosenberg, placed on the high grounds between Echmühl and Laichling, was now hard pressed, being assailed by the Würtemburgers under Vandamme, who issued from the former village on the one side, and the victorious troops of Davoust, who debouched with loud shouts from the latter on the other. But these brave men, fronting both

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42.

Battle of
Echmühl.
April 22.

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¹ Stut. 139,
145. Pel. ii.
79, 85. Jom.
ii. 174. Thib.
vii. 334.

ways, presented an invincible resistance to the enemy ; the repeated charges of the Bavarian horse against their guns were baffled by the valour of the Austrian cuirassiers ; and the battle wore a doubtful aspect in that quarter, when intelligence arrived that Lannes had made himself master of a battery of sixteen guns on the left, after sabring the cannoneers, who gloriously fell beside their pieces.¹

43.
Napoleon
gains the
victory.

Rightly supposing that the Archduke would suspend his attack on the right, in consequence of this check on the left, against which the constantly increasing masses of the enemy were now concentrating, and that a general retreat would take place, Napoleon conceived that the decisive moment had arrived, and therefore brought up the reserve cavalry, which hitherto had not taken a part in the action, and sent it forward, at a rapid pace, along the high-road to Ratisbon, to harass their retreat. At the same time a general advance took place along the whole line ; Lannes on the right, Lefebvre and Vandamme in the centre, Davoust on the left, Massena and Oudinot, with the Guards, in reserve. Orders to fall back were now given by the Archduke, or rather a change of front took place, the left retiring rapidly, and the whole wheeling back to a certain degree on the pivot of the right, which held firm at Abach, so as to present a new front oblique to the former, but still barring the great road to Ratisbon to the enemy. His troops were disposed in echelon, from Santing to Isling, in a sort of column parallel to the highway, at the distance of a mile and a half from it ; while on that chaussée he left only the grenadiers, who were still untouched, and, in the rear of all, the undaunted cuirassiers. These dispositions, though based on the abandonment of the field of battle and the victory to his antagonists, were admirably calculated to preserve the troops from disaster in the hazardous operation of retiring before a victorious enemy—the great object to which the attention of the Archduke was always

directed. The movements on the part of the Imperialists were at first performed with firmness and regularity ; but by degrees their infantry fell into confusion, in consequence of the frequent woods which interrupted their line of march, and the close pursuit of the enemy, which prevented the ranks, once broken, from being ever thoroughly regained.¹

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¹ Stut. 146,
148. Pel. ii.
85, 92. Jom.
iii. 174.

The consequences might have been disastrous in the level and open plains which occurred when the retiring columns approached the Danube, had not the Archduke placed twelve squadrons of the Emperor's cuirassiers and a large body of hussars in front of Eglofsheim, which was garrisoned by six battalions of grenadiers, and supported by several powerful batteries. As the pursuing columns approached this imposing mass of cavalry, they paused till the French horse came up in sufficient strength to hazard an engagement ; a variety of charges of hussars then took place on both sides, with various success ; but at length the magnificent Austrian cuirassiers bore down with apparently irresistible force upon their pursuers. The French light horse could not withstand the shock, and were quickly dispersed ; but their cuirassiers came up, and then two rival bodies, heavily armed, equally brave, equally disciplined, engaged in mortal combat. So vehement was the onset, so nearly matched the strength of the combatants, so tremendous the conflict, that both parties, as if by mutual consent, suspended their fire to await its issue ; the roar of the musketry subsided, even the heavy booming of the artillery ceased, and from the mêlée was heard only, as from the battles of the knights of old,² the loud clang of the

44.
Desperate
cavalry ac-
tion in front
of Ratisbon.

Atlas,
Plate 53.

² Stut. 144,
148. Pel. ii.
85, 94. Jom.
iii. 174. Sav.
iv. 54.

* "Εφριξεν δὲ μάχη φθισίμβροτος ἐγχέεισι
Μάκρῃς, ἃς εἶχον ταμεισίχρους ὅσσε δ' αὖ μερδεν
Αὐγὴ χαλκείη κορύθων ἀπὸ λαμπομενάνων,
Θωρήκων τε νιοσμῆκτων, σακίων τε φαινῶν,
'Ερχομένων ἄμυδις· μαλα κεν θρασυκάρδιος εἴη,
'Ὅς τότε ληθήσειεν ἰδὼν πόνον, οὐδ' ἀπάχοιτο."

HOMER'S *Iliad*, xiii. 339, 344.

CHAP. swords ringing on the helmets and cuirasses of the daunt-
LVI. less antagonists.

1809.

45.

In which the
Austrian
horse are
at length
overthrown.

The sun set while the contest was still undecided ; the moon rose on the deadly strife, and amidst her silvery rays, fire was struck on all sides by the steel upon the armour, and dazzling sparks flew around the combatants, as if a thousand anvils were at once ringing under the blows of the forgers. Nothing could overcome the heroic courage of the Imperialists ; but their equipment was not equal to that of their opponents, and in close fight the Austrian horsemen, whose front only was covered, were not an adequate match for the cuirassiers of Napoleon, whose armour went entirely round their body. After a desperate struggle, their numbers were so reduced that they were unable any longer to make head against the enemy, and leaving two-thirds of their number on the field, they were driven in disorder along the chaussée towards Ratisbon. But their heroic stand, however fatal to themselves, proved the salvation of the army. During the engagement, the artillery and infantry withdrew in safety to the rear ; and Napoleon, who perceived that the Archduke had brought up the reserve under Lichtenstein, which had not yet been engaged, dreading a reverse like that which befell the Austrians in similar circumstances at Marengo, reluctantly, and against the earnest advice of Lannes, gave orders for the army to halt, and bivouac on the ground which they occupied.¹

¹ Stat. 146,
151. Pel. ii.
85, 94. Jom.
iii. 174, 175.
Sav. iv. 54,
55.

46.

The Arch-
duke re-
treats across
the Danube,
and Ratis-
bon is taken
by the
French.

The situation of the Archduke was now very critical— with a victorious army, headed by Napoleon, in his front, and the broad Danube, traversed only by the single bridge of Ratisbon, in his rear. By bringing up his whole forces from the opposite side of the river, and concentrating his troops from Abach and the right, he was still in a situation to compensate the losses of the day, and give battle with eighty thousand admirable troops in front of Ratisbon.* But that field was emi-

* He had sixty thousand men around the walls of Ratisbon the night after

nently hazardous, for a serious disaster sustained there might lead to total ruin ; and his army was not only extremely fatigued by the constant combats and marches of five successive days, but considerably affected in its spirit by the reverses it had experienced, and seriously weakened by the loss of the reserve parks and ammunition train at Landshut. Five thousand men had been killed and wounded, and seven thousand made prisoners in the battle which had just terminated, besides twelve standards and sixteen pieces of cannon, taken by the enemy. Though Lichtenstein's corps much more than supplied these losses, yet the French Guards had just arrived on the field from Spain, and Massena's corps, and Oudinot's grenadiers, which had not been engaged at all, were certain to bear the brunt of the next battle which might ensue. Influenced by these considerations, the Archduke resolved to retire during the night, and restore the spirit and recruit the losses of his army in Bohemia, before again engaging in active operations. A bridge of boats was immediately thrown over the Danube, some miles above Ratisbon, and over it and the bridge at that town the army defiled without intermission the whole night. With such expedition and order was this critical operation conducted, that before nine o'clock on the following morning, not only were almost all the soldiers, but nearly all the guns, chariots, and ammunition waggons, safely on the other side. When the French, who, from the large watch-fires kept up on the enemy's lines during the night, supposed a decisive battle was intended for the ensuing day, stood to their arms in the morning, they beheld with astonishment the whole plain of Ratisbon deserted, except by a few broken waggons or gun-carriages,¹ and saw only in the extreme distance dense masses of cavalry protecting

¹ Stat. 160,
164. Pel. ii.
93, 99. Jom,
iii. 174, 175.
Thib. vii.
234, 235.

the battle : including Bellegarde's corps, which was still on the other side of the Danube, the total force was about eighty thousand.—STUTTERHEIM, 159 ; and GRUNE'S *MS. Correspondence*. .

CHAP.
LVI.

the retreat of the last trains within the walls of Ratisbon.*

1809.

47.
Operations
against Ra-
tisbon by
the French,
and wound
of Napo-
leon.

No sooner did Napoleon discover that the Archduke had withdrawn the bulk of his forces during the night, than he moved forward the whole cavalry to attack the rearguard, drawn up in front of Ratisbon. Notwithstanding all their efforts, they could not prevent great confusion occurring as the last of the carriages withdrew into the town; and nearly a thousand brave horsemen there sacrificed themselves for the safety of the rest of the army. The screen of cavalry which was drawn up round the bridge of boats happily concealed its existence from the enemy till the troops were all over; but the pontoons themselves were burned, or fell into the hands of the victors. At length, the rearguard was all withdrawn within the walls of Ratisbon, the gates closed, and the ramparts lined with infantry. Napoleon at noon arrived on the spot, and in his anxiety to press the assault, approached so near the walls that a musket-ball struck him on the right foot, and occasioned a considerable contusion. The pain obliged him to dismount from his horse; the report spread that the Emperor was wounded; and instantly the soldiers broke from their ranks, and leaving their muskets, their guns, their horses, crowded round their beloved chief. Regardless of the cannon-balls which fell among the dense group, fifteen thousand men of all arms hastened to the spot, every one forgetting his own danger in intense anxiety concerning their general's welfare. After a few minutes, the Emperor again

* The French lost in the battle of Ecmühl about six thousand men. The bulletin stated the general loss from the opening of the campaign, at twelve hundred killed, and four thousand wounded; which according to their usual proportion of admitting only a fourth part of its real amount, would make it about twenty thousand men, which was probably very near the mark. The Austrians, in the whole five days, lost in killed, wounded, and prisoners, about thirty thousand, and one hundred pieces of cannon.—See *First Bulletin*, 24th April 1809; PELET, ii. 99; and GRÜNE'S *Correspondence*, a copy of which the author obtained from the Imperial archives at Vienna, through the kindness of his valued friend, Captain Basil Hall.

mounted his horse; a rapturous cheer from the warlike multitude announced the joyful event to the army; and soon the rolling of the drums and clang of the trumpets recalled the soldiers in all directions to their arms. But the pain was so great that, after he retired to his tent, notwithstanding all his fortitude, Napoleon swooned away. The wound, however, was not attended with any serious consequences.^{1*}

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

¹ Sav. iv. 56,
57. Pel. ii.
103, 105.
Memorial,
i. 192.

This perilous incident retarded only for a few minutes the progress of the attack. Lannes, who directed the operations, perceiving a large house which rested against the rampart, pointed several guns against its walls, which speedily reduced them to ruins, and formed a sort of breach, by which access might be obtained to the summit. A heavy fire, however, was kept up from the rampart, which rendered the crossing of the glacis highly dangerous, and for long no soldiers could be found who would incur the hazard. Impatient of the delay, Marshal Lannes seized a scaling-ladder, and himself ran forward over the perilous space, swept in every part by the enemy's balls. "You shall see," said he, "that your marshal is still a grenadier." Animated by his example, the troops rushed on, cleared the glacis, leaped into the ditch, and, crowding up the breach formed by the ruined house, forced their way into the place: LABEDOYÈRE, reserved for a melancholy fate in future times, was the first man who was seen on the summit. The troops now followed rapidly into the town: the gates, attacked in flank, were seized and opened, and the streets filled with a multitude of fierce assailants. Still the Hungarian grenadiers maintained their resistance: slowly retiring towards the bridge, they kept up an incessant discharge upon their pursuers; the houses took fire in the conflict; the ammunition waggons were only rescued from the

48.
Assault of
Ratisbon.

* A parallel incident happened to Hannibal at the siege of Saguntum. "Ut vero Hannibal ipse, dum murum incautius subit, adversum femur tragula graviter ictus cecidit: tanta circa fuga ac trepidatio fuit, ut non multum abesset, quin opera ac vineæ desererentur."—LIVY, xxi. 7.

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LVI.

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¹ Stut. 162,
169. Jom. ii.
176, 177.
Pel. ii. 103,
111. Thib.
vii. 235,
236. Sav.
iv. 57, 58.

flames by the united efforts of both friends and foes ; and, after losing half their numbers in the desperate strife, they reached the barricades of the bridge, where the cannonade from the opposite side was so violent as to render all further pursuit impossible. The French headquarters were established for the night in the convent of Prull, under the walls ; in the course of it, the bridge was evacuated ; and, next day, the Austrian rearguard was discovered beyond Stadt-am-hoff, covering the retreat of the army to the woody heights of the Bohmerwald.¹

49.
Great re-
sults of
these
actions.

The advantages gained by these brilliant operations to Napoleon were very great. Twelve days only had elapsed since he left Paris ; and already he had reassembled the army after its imprudent dispersion by Berthier, combated the Austrians on four successive days, separated Hiller and the Archduke Louis from the Archduke Charles, thrown the two former back upon the Inn, in too inconsiderable strength to be able to cover Vienna, and driven the latter to an eccentric retreat into the Bohemian mountains. Thirty thousand Austrians had fallen or been made prisoners in these disastrous engagements ; a hundred pieces of cannon, six hundred ammunition waggons, two pontoon trains, and an immense quantity of baggage taken ; and the spirit of the vanquished so thoroughly broken as to render them incapable, for some time, of engaging in active operations. The road to Vienna lay open to the conqueror : it was a matter of mere convenience to him when he should step forward and seize the capital of the monarchy, its magnificent arsenal, and boundless resources of every kind. Twenty thousand men were lost to the French army ; but what were they amongst such a host, and what such a diminution compared to the incalculable moral influence upon his own troops and those of his allies, in consequence of such a series of successes at the very outset of the campaign !² If ever the words of Cæsar, *Veni, vidi, vici*,

² Jom. iii.
177.

were applicable to a modern conqueror, they might have been used by Napoleon on this occasion.

It was by indefatigable activity, and the nicest calculation of time, that these astonishing results had been obtained; and never had the Emperor displayed in a more striking manner the untiring energy of his character. Unwearied by a rapid journey, night and day, for six successive days, from Paris, he no sooner arrived at Donauwörth than he began the incessant questioning and correspondence, which, with him, were the invariable preludes to great achievements. His letters to his lieutenants, during the next five days, would of themselves make a volume. His calculation of time was so exact, and the habits of precise obedience on the part of his generals so complete, that his divisions invariably arrived on the ground assigned them at the very moment on which he relied, and when their operation was required; and generally again marched and combated on the day following, without any intermediate repose. By this means, though his forces were not, upon the whole, more numerous, at least at that period, than those of the Austrians, they were almost always greatly superior at the point of attack. Nor did the Emperor shun the fatigue which he thus imposed upon his soldiers: on the contrary, not one of them underwent anything like the mental and bodily labour to which he subjected himself. From the morning of the 19th, when the battle of Abensberg began, till the night of the 23d, when that of Ratisbon terminated, he was on horseback, or dictating letters, at least eighteen hours a-day; he had outstripped his own saddle-horses by the rapidity of his journey, and knocked up those of the King of Bavaria, by the fatigue they had undergone. When all around him were ready to drop down with exhaustion, he began to read and dictate despatches, and sat up half the night receiving reports from the generals and marshals, and completing the directions for the succeeding day.¹ He has himself told

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

50.

The indefatigable activity of Napoleon and his soldiers was the principal cause of these successes.

¹ Sav. iv. 53, 59. Thib. vii. 234. Pel. ii. 120, 121.

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LVI.

1809.

us, that his manœuvres at this period in Bavaria were the most brilliant of his life ;* and without going the length of so extraordinary an eulogium, it may safely be affirmed that they never were excelled by the operations either of himself or any other general.

51.

Impressive
scene in the
conferring
of military
honours at
Ratisbon.

On the day following, the Emperor reviewed a great part of his army at Ratisbon, and one of those imposing spectacles was exhibited which, almost as much as his military talents, contributed to his astonishing successes. As each regiment defiled before him, Napoleon demanded from the colonel who were the most deserving among the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, and in presence of the army conferred on them the honours and distinctions assigned to them. On these interesting occasions he himself decided on every case, and often conferred the reward on a common soldier, in preference to those of higher grade who were recommended. He recognised some of the veterans of Marengo or the Pyramids as they were presented to him, and when conferring the cross, gave them a signal of recognition by a slight tap on the cheek or clap on the shoulder, accompanied by a kind expression, as, "I make you a baron or a chevalier." One of these veterans, on being presented, asked the Emperor if he

i O'Meara,
ii. 206.

* "The greatest military manœuvres I ever executed, and those for which I give myself most credit, were performed at Echemühl, and were infinitely superior to those at Marengo, or to any other of my actions."¹ "On this day, I heard the Emperor repeat what I had often previously heard him say, that the finest manœuvres of his life were those which preceded the battle of Echemühl."—LAS CASES, v. 168, 169.

The details of the grounds on which this striking opinion is formed, are thus given by Pelet, and quoted by Las Cases: "In four days of combats and manœuvres were completed the destinies of the Austrian army — of that army recently so numerous and arrogant, the most formidable and perfectly equipped which Austria had ever sent forth. By his first dispositions, Napoleon had organised the plan of his great battle, secured his outposts, and reconnoitred the ground for a battle in front of Augsburg, according to the direction which the enemy's columns seemed disposed to take. He had corrected the false dispositions of Berthier, and collected his forces in such masses on each wing, as to preclude the danger which he had induced. On the 18th April he arrived on the ground and made his dispositions, and announced that in three days all would be accomplished: on the 19th it commenced, and the junction of the wings took place under the cannon of the Archduke: on the 20th, he broke the enemy's centre at Abensberg, and entirely separated

did not remember him. "How should I?" answered Napoleon. "It was I," replied the soldier, "who in the desert of Syria, at the moment of your utmost necessity, gave you a portion of my rations." Napoleon at once recognised him, and said, "Oh! I recollect you perfectly, and make you a chevalier, with an annual endowment of twelve hundred francs," (£50.) These heart-thrilling scenes excited the usual transports among the French soldiers; but on the troops of the Confederation, upon whom honours and bounties were wisely and profusely showered, and to whom they were perfectly new, they produced an unbounded impression. It then appeared how strongly the German heart was capable of being moved by those appeals to honour and generous feeling, of which the Allied sovereigns in after times so largely availed themselves. At the same time, forty of the most deserving of the 65th regiment, which had capitulated at Ratisbon, were admitted into the Old Guard, to show that the Emperor entertained no displeasure at that corps for that untoward event; and a proclamation was addressed to the army, which, with just pride, though in exaggerated terms, recounted their great exploits.^{1*}

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

¹ Pel. ii.
111, 112.
Thib. vii.
237.

But though these splendid triumphs attended the arms

their left wing from their centre: on the 21st, he routed the left wing at Landshut, got possession of its magazines, park equipages, and communications. Quick as lightning, he returned on the 22d to Echemühl, to deal out his final blows against the army of the Archduke; the remains of which with difficulty saved themselves behind the walls of Ratisbon and the mountains of Bohemia. Had Massena, as he was ordered, attacked Landshut on the 21st, on the right bank of the Isar, at the same moment when Napoleon pressed him on the left bank, the remains of Hiller's corps would have been entirely destroyed: had Ratisbon not been delivered up to the Archduke, the remains of his army, cooped up in the bend formed by the Danube at that place, would have been utterly ruined. Thus, but for these untoward incidents, the vast army of the Archduke would have been cut to pieces in these four days: as it was, it was severed in two, and found salvation only in flight."—LAS CASES, v. 196.

* "Soldiers, you have justified my anticipations: you have supplied by bravery the want of numbers, and marked the difference which exists between the soldiers of Cæsar and the armed rabble of Xerxes. Within the space of a few days we have triumphed in the battles of Thaur, of Abensberg, and Echemühl, and in the combats of Freysing, Landshut, and Ratisbon: one hundred pieces of cannon, forty standards, fifty thousand prisoners, three bridge equipages, three thousand baggage waggons with their horses, all the regimental

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

52.

Defeat of
the Bava-
rians by
Hiller.
April 24.

of Napoleon, where he commanded in person, the fate of war was very different in other quarters ; and already were to be seen convincing proofs, from the disasters sustained under the direction of his lieutenants, that the invincible veterans of the republic were fast wearing out, that the conscripts of the empire possessed no superiority over the now improved and invigorated armies by which they were opposed, and that the successes, where he in person commanded, were owing to the talent of his combinations or the terrors of his name. Hiller, who had retired to the Inn after the disaster of Landshut, finding that he was not pursued by the French troops, and having ascertained that Napoleon had diverged with the bulk of his forces in another direction, deemed it a favourable opportunity to take vengeance on the Bavarians, by whom he had been somewhat incautiously pursued, for the losses which he had experienced. Having collected some small reinforcements on the Inn, and divided his troops, about thirty thousand strong, into three columns, he remeasured his steps, and suddenly attacked the Bavarians under WREDE, who, along with the division of Molitor, both under the orders of Bessières, were advancing beyond the defile of Neumarkt, and had taken post on the heights in front of St Verti. The Bavarians made at first a stout resistance, but, being outnumbered and outflanked, they were soon driven back ; and though Molitor came up to support them with some regiments of his division, they too were compelled to retreat, and sustained a considerable loss.¹ Before night the French and their allies were driven entirely off the field, with the loss of fifteen hundred men killed, wounded,

¹ Stat. 172,
176. Jom.
iii. 178.
Pel. ii. 166,
170.

caissons,—such are the fruits of the rapidity of your marches and of your courage. The enemy, seduced by a perjured cabinet, appeared to retain no recollection of you : his wakening has been speedy, for you have appeared more terrible than ever. Lately he crossed the Inn and invaded the territory of our allies ; lately he talked of nothing less than carrying the war into the bosom of our country : now defeated, dispersed, he flies in consternation. Already my advanced guard has passed the Inn ; in a month we shall be at Vienna.”—*NAPOLÉON to his troops, April 24, 1809 ; PELET, ii. 115.*

and prisoners. But the intelligence which Hiller received in the night of the battle of Ecmühl, and the retreat of the Archduke upon Ratisbon, induced him to halt in the career of victory, and remeasure his steps to the Inn, in order to cover the approach to Vienna.

A disaster of a still more serious description was sustained about the same period, by the Viceroy Eugene Beauharnais, in the Italian plains. On the same day on which the Archduke Charles crossed the Inn, his brother, the Archduke John, passed the mountain frontier of the kingdom of Italy with forty-eight thousand men, and after defiling over the Isonzo at Görizia, and going through Udina, poured down on the Italian plains, and took post in front of Passeriano, already famous in the diplomacy of Napoleon.* The Viceroy had above forty-five thousand men to oppose the invader; but they were, in great part, of Italian extraction, and could hardly be relied upon to withstand the shock of Transalpine forces. This inferiority speedily appeared in the first actions of the campaign. Eugene fell back across the Tagliamento, and established his headquarters at SACILE. The Austrians, two days after, came up in great force, and at Pordenone surprised the 35th French regiment, which, with its eagle and four pieces of cannon, fell into the enemy's hands. Stung to the quick by this disgrace, and fearful of the effect of any further retreat upon the spirit of his troops, the Viceroy determined to hold firm and give battle to the enemy. Orders accordingly were given for the whole army to suspend its retreat, and retrace its steps, on the 15th; and on the day following he made an attack on the Imperialists between Sacile and Pordenone.¹

The field of battle, which lay between Vigo-Nuova and Porcia, on the gentle slopes where the Alps of Roveredo melt into the Italian plains, was singularly favourable for the operations of cavalry, in which arm the Austrians had considerably the advantage. So little did they anti-

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

53.
Successful
operations
of the Arch-
duke John
in Italy.

Atlas,
Plate 11.

April 14.

¹ Erz. Johan.
Feld. 44, 52.
Pel. iii. 141,
152.

54.
Total defeat
of Eugene
Beauharnais
at Sacile.
April 16.

* *Ante*, Chap. xxvi. § 3.

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LVI.

1809.

cipate, however, an attack, that at the moment when it commenced, the Archduke John was engaged in hearing mass at Pordenone, and one of his corps was considerably in the rear. The best dispositions, however, which circumstances would admit, were made to repel the enemy; and as the troops in the rear successively came up, they were passed on to the plain of Vigo-Nuova, so as to menace the communication between Eugene and the bridge of Sacile. The combat was very warm, and in the first instance, before the corps of Chastellar came up, Prince Eugene had the advantage. At the village of Porcia, in particular, which was repeatedly taken and retaken, a frightful carnage took place. Gradually, however, the Austrians, who had outflanked their opponents, cooped up their line within very narrow limits; and at length it was driven into the space between Fontana, Fredda, and Porcia, which did not exceed two miles in breadth. Fearful of the consequences of any disaster upon troops confined within such narrow limits, Eugene gave the signal to retreat, which was effected at first by squares in echelon, which arrested their pursuers by alternate volleys as on a review day. But at the defile occasioned by the bridge of the Levinza and the marshes on either side of that stream, they fell into disorder, which was soon augmented by the intelligence that seven thousand men of the Austrian reserve had passed them, and already occupied Sacile. The whole army upon this fell into confusion,—horse, foot, and cannon became blended together in frightful disorder, and fled towards the Adige, without either direction or further attempt at resistance. The approach of night alone saved them from a total overthrow; but as it was, they lost four thousand killed and wounded, and an equal number of prisoners, besides fifteen pieces of cannon; while the Austrians had not to lament the loss of half the number.¹

¹ Erz. Johan. Feld. 44, 52. Pel. iii. 141, 163. Jom. iii. 179, 180. Stut. 164. 169.

This important victory in the outset of the campaign was likely to prove decisive, as that of Magnano in 1799

had been,* of the fate of Italy, and would have been attended with not less material results upon the general issue of the war, had its effects not been obliterated, and the career of success in the plains of Lombardy arrested, by the rapid and overwhelming advance of Napoleon to Vienna. As it was, however, and even though the Archduke John was far from following up his successes with the vigour which might have been expected, the results of the battle were in the highest degree important. Eugene, reinforced by some battalions which he had left at Verona, succeeded in at length reorganising his army, and took post behind the fortified line of the Adige, already immortalised in the campaigns of Napoleon. The Archduke, though obliged to send three divisions at this period to observe Marmont in Dalmatia, and considerably weakened by the necessity of making large detachments to mask Venice and Palma-Nuova, in which the enemy had large garrisons, followed his retreating adversary, and took post, with thirty thousand excellent troops, in the famous position of Caldiero, a few miles from Verona. But the spirit of the two armies was essentially changed; the Italians, depressed and weakened by defeat, felt the old superiority of the Transmontane forces, and were prepared to fall back, as in the time of Suwarroff, to the furthest verge of the Italian peninsula; while the Austrians, roused to the highest degree by their early success, confidently anticipated a repetition of the glories of Novi and the Trebbia. But the anticipations of both parties were traversed by the extraordinary progress of Napoleon down the valley of the Danube, which soon rendered necessary the concentration of the whole forces of the monarchy for the defence of the capital.^{1†}

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

55.

Important
effects of
this victory
on the
Italian
campaign.

¹ Erz. Johan.
Feld. 53, 57.
Pel. iii. 163,
167. Stat.
179, 182.
Jom. iii.
180, 181.

* *Ante*, Chap. xxvii. § 36.

† In the order of time, the war in the Tyrol should be treated of immediately after the opening of the campaign in Italy: but the vast moral importance of that contest, as well as its romantic character, require a separate chapter; and it will be treated of in a following one, before that which narrates the battle of Wagram.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

56.

Hopes which
the com-
mencement
of the cam-
paign afford-
ed to the
Allies.

Thus, though Napoleon's successes had been great on the Bavarian plains, he had by no means gained any decided advantage: his armies had been routed or run the most imminent hazard, wherever he did not command in person; and disasters which would have been decisive in any other warfare had been experienced by his lieutenants on the Italian frontier. It was evident that the forces of the contending parties were approaching to an equality: the wonted vehemence of the Republican armies had disappeared when led by the marshals of France; the Austrians had clearly proved their superiority to the allies who swelled the columns of their adversaries; and it was the consummate talents, overwhelming force, and paralysing renown of Napoleon, that alone still chained victory to the standards of the Grand Army. Reversing the principles of both parties in the contest,—the fortunes of France had come to depend on the genius of a single man; the pyramid rested on its apex: driven by necessity to a more enlarged policy, Austria was reaping the fruits of popular enthusiasm, and successfully combating the revolution with the arms which itself had created. The aristocratic power, generally successful, failed only from the want of a leader adequate to the encounter of the popular hero; the democratic, elsewhere defeated, prevailed through the extraordinary abilities of one man. Such a state of matters might promise little for present success, but it was pregnant with hope for future deliverance. Great as may be the ascendancy, unbounded the activity of a single leader, they cannot, in the long run, compensate general disaster; and, in all prolonged contests, that power is ultimately destined to victory which, appealing to principles that find a responsive echo in the human heart, rests upon the organised and directed efforts of the many, rather than the abilities, how splendid soever, of the few.

APPENDIX.

CHAPTER LIII.

NOTE A, p. 457.

BUDGET OF GREAT BRITAIN FOR 1808.

WAR INCOME.

Malt and Pension duties,	.	.	.	.	.	.	£3,000,000
Bank advances,	.	.	.	.	.	.	3,500,000
Surplus of consolidated fund,	.	.	.	.	.	.	4,226,876
Surplus income of 1807,	.	.	.	.	.	.	2,253,111
War taxes,	.	.	.	.	.	.	20,000,000
Lottery,	.	.	.	.	.	.	300,000
Exchequer bills,	.	.	.	.	.	.	4,500,000
Do. for East India Company,	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,500,000
Exchequer bills charged on 1809,	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,161,100
Loan,*	.	.	.	.	.	.	8,000,000
War income,							£48,441,087

PERMANENT INCOME.

Customs,	.	.	.	.	.	.	£7,462,380
Excise,	.	.	.	.	.	.	17,896,145
Stamps,	.	.	.	.	.	.	4,458,735
Land and assessed taxes,	.	.	.	.	.	.	7,073,530
Post-office,	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,277,538
Pension tax,	.	.	.	.	.	.	62,685
Do.	.	.	.	.	.	.	71,353
Hackney coaches,	.	.	.	.	.	.	26,455
Hawkers and pedlars,	.	.	.	.	.	.	10,325
Total permanent,	.	.	.	.	.	.	£38,339,146
Add war,	.	.	.	.	.	.	48,441,087
Grand total,	.	.	.	.	.	.	£86,780,233

* It was afterwards by the vote of credit extended to £10,100,000.

WAR EXPENDITURE.

Navy,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	£17,496,047
Army,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	19,439,189
Ordnance,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4,534,571
Miscellaneous,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,750,000
East India Company,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,500,000
Swedish subsidy,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,100,000
Vote of credit,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2,500,000
								<hr/>
War expenditure,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	£48,319,807

PERMANENT EXPENDITURE.

Interest of public debt,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	£20,771,871
And charges,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	210,549
Sinking fund,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	10,188,606
Interest of Exchequer bills,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,616,562
Civil list,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,638,677
Civil government of Scotland,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	85,470
Miscellaneous charges,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	787,262
								<hr/>
Total permanent,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	£35,298,997
Add war,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	48,319,807
								<hr/>
Grand total,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	£83,618,807

The increased expenditure arising from the Spanish war, which was not foreseen in the budget, raised the charges to £84,797,000.—See *Parl. Deb.* xi. 1-15; *Parl. Papers*, and *Ann. Reg.* 1808, 103-105.

CHAPTER LVI.

NOTE A, p. 651.

FORCES OF THE FRENCH AND AUSTRIANS.

The following is a detailed statement of the different corps of the French and Austrian armies, taken from the accurate works of Pelet and Stutterheim.—*Mémoires sur la Guerre de 1809, par PELET; STUTTERHEIM, Krieg von 1809.*

FRENCH.

IN GERMANY.

		Effective.	Present.	Horse.
Army of the Rhine,	Davoust,	108,458	93,114	26,933
Corps of observation on the Baltic,	Bernadotte,	15,360	12,933	3,624
Reserve of Infantry,	Oudinot,	28,861	26,480	2,646
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total French in Germany,		152,679	132,527	33,203

CONFEDERATION OF THE RHINE.

Bavarians,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30,800
Saxons,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	15,800
Württembergers,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12,000
Westphalians,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	14,000
Lesser Powers of the Confederation,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	29,240
Total German,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	101,840

IN POLAND.

Poles,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	19,200
Russians,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	15,000
									34,200

IN ITALY.

Five divisions of Infantry, three of Cavalry, under Eugene,	.	.	60,000
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TOTAL EFFECTIVE.

French in Germany,	152,679
Confederation of the Rhine,	101,840
Poles and Russians,	34,200
In Italy,	60,000

Grand total,	348,719
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Of whom 300,000 might be present with the eagles, and 428 pieces of cannon with the Grand Army—PELET, i. 172, 185.

AUSTRIANS.

IN GERMANY.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Gun.
1st Corps—Count Bellegarde in Bohemia, . . .	25,700	2100	
2d Corps—Count Kollowrath at Pilsen, . . .	23,300	2700	
3d Corps—Hohenzollern at Prague, . . .	23,913	1010	
4th Corps—Prince Rosenberg around Scharding, . . .	24,914	2894	
5th Corps—Archduke Louis at Braunau, . . .	24,383	2042	
6th Corps—General Hiller at Braunau, . . .	23,374	2139	
1st Reserve—Prince John of Lichtenstein, at Neuhaus, . . .	12,998	2564	
2d Reserve—Keimayer, Braunau, . . .	6,950	2460	
Jellachich's division, Salzburg, . . .	9,962	1009	
Artillerymen for 518 pieces, distributed between these corps, . . .	12,976		
	188,470	18,198	518

IN ITALY.

8th Corps—Marquis Chastellar at Klagenfurth,	.	18,250	1942	
9th Corps—Count Giulay, at Lapach,	. .	24,348	2758	
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		42,598	4700	128

IN POLAND.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Guns.
7th Corps—Archduke Ferdinand in Croatia, . . .	30,200	5200	94

IN THE TYROL.

Chastellar's division (separate from his corps,) . . .	9672	260	
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TOTAL EFFECTIVE.

In Germany, under the Archduke Charles, . . .	188,570	18,918	518
In Italy, under the Archduke John, . . .	42,598	4700	148
In Poland, under the Archduke Ferdinand, . . .	30,200	5200	94
In the Tyrol,	9,672	260	16
Grand total,	271,040	29,078	776

Of whom 250,000 might be relied on for active operations.—STUTTERHEIM, 38, 46.

END OF VOL. VIII.



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